

Nizhny Tagil's

SEX SLAVE GRAVEYARD

page 4

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

(This issue's [sic] letter of the week comes from Richard Bickerstaff, who'd sent us his Dyevolution article, and was never informed that we planned to publish it. Here is his reply to our surprise publication.)

THE TASMANIAN EGO

Dear Exile Editor,

Maybe I could get a heads-up you're publishing that article? Way to inspire your freelancers! I didn't even greenlight you to publish it, I asked if you were interested. I figured you guys are constitutionally tight-pursed, and it's one of those things you intuitively imagine mainstream publications being squeamish to say, perhaps, although I don't know. It's short, in the form it's in, but if there's a grain of truth to it, it's kind of a big deal, whether anybody's allowed to say it, or takes note. I mean, I think if I were Vladimir Putin, I'd want to at least consider the notion, for forty-five seconds, and fuck, who knows, maybe he will. My friend's like "did you see that thing hot Russian chicks on the Exile? I sent it to my [hot American/Russian] girlfriend." (without knowing I wrote it! Seriously!) Can I at least get a couple print copies of that?

You should anonymously send it to the Howard Stern people. It's short and simple enough one of his moron-staffers could comprehend it, and I'm sure they've seen Eastern-bloc strippers, at least (I have...usually from Ukraine or Belarus). I would, but the cost/benefit doesn't look promising on my end.

Richard

Dear Mr. Richard,

Damn, that literary ego of yours has got a serious future! Seriously, you got a little whiff of literary fame, and suddenly we're now the reason why that letter-transformed-into-an-article isn't causing what Beigeists would call a "paradigm shift" in the way we look at the world, or at least in the way Howard Stern gets his material. We're not mocking your lit ego dude. Seriously. We're saying, "run with it, let it fly like the wind, release its energy. And if in the end your Tasmanian Ego leaves you broke, friendless, medical-insurance-less, and unfairly undiscovered and un-famous just when the first colon polyps appear, then hey, take it from us: you did the right thing."

SAVE US FROM THE BALTICS AND CHAINS

Dear eXile Readers,

Dear Editor,

http://old.exile.ru/2007-May-18/burn_baltics_burn.html

So-called "Russian minority" mostly consists of occupant leftovers who have no right to gain citizenship. Take some time and read the Geneva IV convention which clearly states "Art. 49. The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies."

Therefore - not a minority, but illegal inhabitants [gee, rhymes with "illegal combatants." Guantanamo anybody?—Ed]. Putin has called them back to Russia many times and USA gave money to build apartments in Russia for ex-military personnel, but still they prefer to live in a country where they are not liked very much. Their problem.

Nazi-Germany tried to create a race called "Abermensch", but in Soviet Union the project succeeded and the results can be seen forming the core of Notsnoi Dozor, Nashi and other fascist organisations.

Estonian

Dear Mr. Estonian, You know, we could have replied by pointing out that your article is a raw, unvarnished example of pure European village fas-

cism of the sort that died out a few decades ago in real countries, but that would be too easy. We'd call you a sub-chukhonets and tell you to go back to the northeastern Asian tundra where you Finno-Urgs came from, but that would be too much effort. So instead we'll just call you the worst thing we can think of: "Estonian." Because in the world of nations that matter like Russia or America, your country is a synonym for "irrelevant."

WHICH WAY DID HE GO?

Mr. Ames,

What is the email address for the [SIC] section? I could not find it on the website. I sent Dr. Dolan an email, but he never responded, so I thought I might send it to the general feedback address. Phil

Dear Mr. Phil,

Wait, so you're writing a letter to the editor asking what the email address is for the section that is the letters-to-the-editor section? Phil, you are a living example that at least One Child was Left Behind during the Bush education push. Maybe you could offer up your services to Harry Reid for the November elections?

RAGE AGAINST THE CHUKHONETS

Hi,

Sorry to disappoint you, but the Mini-Meatloaf in Face Control is not a Russian at all. I know for a fact that he is the lead singer of a disgusting Finnish "rock"-band called Roctum. That picture is probably old, it seems he has lost a lot of weight since. Check out they're web-site at <http://www.alatie.com/roctum>

Do not ask why I know this, I'm still trying to heal. Anyway, love your newspaper and all that bla bla.

Your's truly,

Lasse Huuhka

Tampere, Finland

Dear Mr. Huuka, Are you the same sort of jerk who told little kids that Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny aren't real? We'd spend a little more time ripping on you chukhontsi but for the fact that one of your own went Columbine on his school, showing that there's still a bit of spark left in the creaky ol' Urgic after all.

BRAZILIAN PEDANT

Hi Gary,

as one of your Brazilian readers, I'm very happy you finally remembered the War of the Triple Alliance (aka "The Paraguayan War"). You're great as usual, but I have, of course, a couple of points:

(i) the Jesuits did their work in the Spanish "province of Paraguay", which was not the same as modern Paraguay. It included all territory between Sao Paulo and Buenos Aires, which were only effectively occupied in the 18th century. Paraguay proper was never ruled by the Jesuits, and Spanish rule there was every bit as exploitative, etc., as in other Spanish colonies.

(ii) the Brazilian army was not a slave army, as you seem to imply, though undeniably a large part of it was composed of "freed" slaves. You're right to mention that the Army was not a career option for the elite in Brazil (thank God, we were a monarchy ruled by civilians throughout the nineteenth century). You're also right in that slaves were often sent in replacement of their owners. This happened mostly, though, in the northern and northeastern areas of Brazil, which were far away from the war and whose (free) population, therefore, could hardly be conscripted and sent to war. But those nearer Paraguay WERE conscripted: between one third and one half of the male population of Rio Grande do Sul province - Brazil's southernmost - was sent to the battlefield, emptying the province. (As you can guess, I'm from Rio Grande do Sul).

Well, keep up the good work. When you have the time, write about the Cisplatine War of 1825-1828 between Brazil and Argentina (which was ridiculous, ended in a stalemate!), or about the battle of Monte Caseros of 1851 (50,000 men fought there, not inconsiderable...). Also, I don't recall you writing about the Latin American wars of independence; surely San Martn's crossing of the Andes in winter merits an article! (If you did write about it, sorry in advance)

Thiago Carvalho

Dear Mr. Carvalho, Richard Bickerstaff replies, "The real problem with Brecher's piece is that a) it took up too much space in the last issue which could have been better utilized by my Dyevolution article, and b) I don't know what "b" is but what the fuck are you writing a fan letter to him for and not to me? Damn it, you see? It's because Ames published my piece too soon and too raw. Damn it! Nobody understands me! It could have been on Howard Stern too! It could have become a Comedy Central show, or a celebrity variety special on NBC. But nooooo. Ah to hell with these amateurs, I'm getting myself an agent." So...Richard...this may not be the time to ask, but, uh, would you write for us again? Even after this? It's, uh, a hazing ritual. Yeah, everyone goes through it. Cool? We're cool? It's all just in the spirit of fun

here, after all! Heh-heh.

BEN OVER

War Nerd,

I read everyone of your pieces a few weeks ago. Now they sort of run together on me. However there was a piece on our copters i found troubling since on a combat mission they were badly chewed up! Whats up? Have we been swindled out of our tax dollars on a system that can't cut it. I turn to you as i won't get a straight answer from the military journals.

I have my doubts about so-called combat copters after what the stinger did to the Russians in the 80s....by the way, fuck that asshole who cant read more than 500 words and fuck all the Malibu non retards who don't read you anyway...viva Bakersfield!!!

Ben

Dear Mr. Ben, No, your tax dollars were wisely spent on those copters. It was a mistake. They all work perfectly fine. The stories about Apaches getting chewed to shreds by Iraqi goat-herders with muskets is pure liberal poppycock. (This message was brought to you by the American Enterprise Institute and their sponsors at Lockheed Martin. Yes, Lockheed Martin: we put your taxdollars to work defending America from Iraqi goat-herders, because we believe that someday, if Americans put their minds to it, we can invent a \$100 million dollar flying machine that will be able to neutralize the Iraqi goat-herder threat. If only they didn't have those damn muskets, we'd have already accomplished the impossible!...But until then, with some more elbow grease, accurate reporting from the American Enterprise Institute, and your tax dollars, we'll get there! We landed a man on the moon, after all! Er, rather, we were able to invent a believable-enough set that made people believe we landed a man on the moon, and hey, what you don't know can't hurt, can it? Oh shit, did we just out the fact that we faked the moon landing? Shit-shit-shit, oh shit, this is bad. Really, really bad. Um, can you forget that we just wrote that? Heh-heh. Please?

Hold on a second...um, can someone hook me up with the R&D lab...yes, R&D? Hi, this is Tom from corporate? Yeah, I was wondering how that new memory-eraser gadget thing was coming along? You know, the one that we're spending all of Ben's tax dollars on. Have you made much progress yet? No? Ha-ha, yeah, I know I told you, "Don't worry about actually making the memory-eraser work, what matters is making Ben pay us his tax dollars," but you know, that was just a little office joking, like over by the water cooler and stuff, ha-ha! No-no-no, nothing, just checking, ha-ha. Go back to spending Ben's money. I'm, uh, going to take a little weekend getaway. You may not hear from me for awhile. Yeah, forward my calls to my secretary.)

IT'S ME, MASHA

Dear Editor,

May i ask, why do you publish Limonov, is it to show how ridiculous are some of our opposition leaders? His envy to Putin will make him mad sooner or later,

imho. I read first 10 and last 10 pages of his book, it was enough to see envy bleeding from every line, Putin is small and his german is not perfect and his wife is ugly and he is not a national type how is that russians want him? WE don't need such president :(Strange why people don't choose Limonov instead, who knows what to do and is such talented writer, definitely better than Dostoevskii and Tolstoi. Teenagers going to prison can prove it.

Maria

Ps

All written above is a humble opinion. Time will show who is who, possibly one day i will be ashamed of evil hallucinations about Limonov. By now he somehow irrationally irritates.

pps

never voted for Putin

Dear Ms. "Maria," Lyudmila, is that you writing to [sic] again in order to defend your hubby? We're touched by your loyalty, but really, Lyudichka, you've got to stop this and just get on with your life. You're the first-lady for crying out loud, it's time you acted like one too.

A RSS HOLE

Gary

Was wondering if you could point your IT Team to a little problem. I originally subscribed to the War Nerd RSS feed to receive an update to whenever you posted a new article. Now all I seem to get is an update for whenever Exile.Ru publish a new article. To be fair I really don't care for there articles, and only want to read yours. Please could you ask them team to Create separate RSS feeds for all different authors on exile.ru I am still going to click through to the article and read it there, so you will still get my advertising dollars.

If this is not solved soon, I will have no choice but to just unsubscribe from the feed and as such will probably completely forget about your articles in the future..

Cheers

Jez

Dear Mr. Jez, We were just about to fire Brecher after reading your letter, but then we saw something about "dollars." So, we've kept him on for now and we've done the RSS feed thing. Waiting for your dollars. Actually, Gary's waiting for your dollars. That's because if you don't start sending them our way like yesterday, we're going to start sending you pieces of Gary's body. Yep, for every week you don't send dollars, we're going to mail you a love handle here, a double-chin there, or a lock of greasy, dandruffy hair. Write that check if you don't want to have blubber on your hands.

A CAPITAL IDEA

War Nerd,

Why don't you put all these essays together, and get it published? I would buy it so fast! You're crazy not to get this published.

Daytripp

Dear Mr. Daytripp, Close your eyes and make a wish. Now, open your eyes, go to amazon.com, and type in "War Nerd." Do we here at the eXile make dreams come true or what?

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AMERICA'S DANGEROUS DECLINE

By Eduard Lukasovich

This week, in the wake of further falls on the world markets, U.S. President George W. Bush announced that he is prepared to push through yet another "stimulus package" on top of the \$195 billion already put forward. Meanwhile, murky Chinese and Arabic state-backed funds are investing tens of billions of dollars into leading Western multinational banking institutions like Citicorp and Merrill Lynch, with others soon to follow.

This is exactly the wrong policy at the wrong time. The free market should be allowed to resolve and harmonize the distortions in whatever way it sees fit. State intervention to shore up banks and put money in the citizens' pockets will only reduce competitiveness and create a cycle of dependency. Bush's decision to use socialism to "cure" the free market is yet another indication of how far

EDITORIAL

America is declining, and how little it has come to terms with this decline.

For several years now, America has been suffering from a "hyperpower complex," in which it still likes to act as if it is the world's only superpower, and can dictate terms to anyone. In reality, America's geopolitical power has suffered one of the most rapid declines since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Who would have thought that a few thousand poorly-armed insurgents in a pair of backwards nations, Iraq and Afghanistan, could defeat superior American forces, and at the same time bankrupt the empire?

In retrospect, it's easy to see why

this happened. A combination of imperial overreach and state-interventionism is exactly what doomed the Soviet Union, as well as Great Britain. Sadly, America is making the same mistake. It cannot admit that it has lost the war in Iraq, and in fact has embarked on a bizarre self-esteem campaign to convince each other that the so-called "surge" actually worked. It's like watching a terminally ill man making plans for his retirement.

Indeed, America today reminds one of the tragic finale in *Of Mice And Men*, with George Bush as Lenny pointing across the ocean, dreaming of his plans to build a giant democracy farms, while his friend George, played by Adam Smith, holds up an old musket-pistol to Bush's head, and, with great sadness, fires a giant musketball of market economics reality into his unwieldy state-interventionist brain.

Today, Americans are too misguided to understand that even if hundreds of billions of dollars disappear in the credit crisis, or the American banking system collapses, or they and hundreds of thousands of American families lose their homes to the waves of foreclosures--that these are not necessarily bad things. It's like ripping off a bandage, I like to say. So if you lose your house, your job, your kids, your future, it's actually just like ripping off a bandage. How hard is it to understand that?

Hard, apparently. That is why I believe that the world's Ascending Powers (APs), namely China, Russia, and India, should demand that the United States halt its state intervention into its failed banks and let the market sort it out. Furthermore, American markets must be pried open to allow Chinese, Russian and Indian banks to move in and snap up the collapsed American banks at firesale prices. True, old nationalist feelings will stir, and Americans will not like watching their once-prized assets sold off to foreigners for cheap, but Americans must be made to under-

stand that they have no other choice. Their finances are in crisis. They must sell everything off now, quickly, and cheaply. Fat is everywhere: they could sell NASA to the Chinese, the school system to Russia, and the Environmental Protection Agency to India, including the parks and recreation services, a socialist holdover. If America wants to survive in the new millennium, it will have to undergo a period of pain.

The free market teaches us to be responsible, and when we aren't, it punishes us. America is being irresponsible by not getting over its hyperpower complex; the laws of the free market responded with an insurgency whose wage costs vastly undercut the bloated American soldiers' costs. This was the genius of free markets at work. Likewise, America today is propping up an outmoded banking sector which cannot compete with the Chinese or Russian banks. America is. And America will lose this war.

To change America's behavior, we must offer them carrots and sticks. If they slash government spending and subsidies, and privatize the Grand Canyon, then our countries should extend them restructuring loans to Citibank and other institutions, provided that we are able to buy a large chunk of that bank at a firesale auction. However, if Bush continues to defy the free market, we must cut off America's credit dependency and push their system to fail. It's for their own good.

The sooner America gets over its hyperpower complex, and stops state-supported industry, the sooner it will be able to turn its country around and take its realistic, more modest place in the world, wounded pride and all.

Eduard Lukasovich is the Central American correspondent for United Russia magazine. He contributed this comment to The eXile. X

IN BRIEF

RUSSIA'S NANOTECHNOLOGY BREAKTHROUGH

MOSCOW (Context) – President Putin's highly-touted multibillion-dollar nanotechnology program announced its first successful breakthrough yesterday, as Russian scientists developed the world's first nano-democracy.

"Our new nano-democracy will represent a leapfrog in authoritarian technology," announced Academic Igor Yinkovich at a press conference.

According to Yinkovich, Russian citizens will soon be given "nano-rights," which will allow them to fit all of their human rights on the head of a pin. These pins can also double as instruments of coercion against any citizen who does not properly appreciate his new nano-rights. "Citizens will no longer be burdened by the weight of too many democratic rights. In fact, in the future, they won't even know that their rights exist!"

President George W. Bush called Putin yesterday to congratulate him, and suggested that if Russian scientists could develop a nano-brain, he would be interested in acquiring one for himself. Bush's brain utilizes outmoded lead components, which are said to be a serious burden for the American president. Most human beings stopped using lead components for brains around the time that Lucy split off from apes.

NEW HOOKAH FLAVORS HIT MOSCOW

MOSCOW (element) – This year's Kalyan Expo in the Krokus Center showcased what is expected to be Russia's hottest hookah trend for 2008: Ass-flavored kalyani.

"Moscow is an ass-flavored city," declared "Miguelo," Russia's premier hookah-pipe preparer. "You can taste ass everywhere: in the coffee, in the Italian food, in the metro, even on my chin. So it is only logical that

ass-flavored kalyani will be the 'in' choice for young, beautiful Muscovites."

The ass-flavoring utilizes a technology developed by President Putin's much-vaunted multibillion-dollar nanotechnology program, as Russian scientists discovered a way to fit nearly two billion sweaty anuses on the head of a pin.

According to Miguelo (whose real name is Sergei Kuzmin), Muscovites have traditionally been drawn to ass-flavorings for centuries. "Empress Anna I used to enjoy ass-flavored mints with her tea, while Tchaikovsky loved the taste of ass so much he even wrote a ballet about it called 'A Mouthful of Ass-Flavored Nuts,' which was later shortened to 'The Nutcracker.'"

Ass-flavored hookahs will be available city-wide by the middle of February, and will spread across Russia as soon as they build some roads. X

AL-DILBERT



SEPARATED AT UGLY STICK



Warmongering media goon Charles Krauthammer...

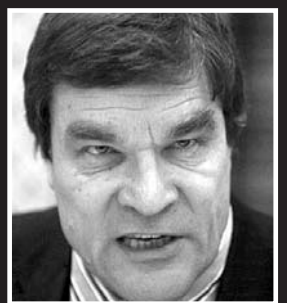


...and bootlicking media whore Candy Crowley?

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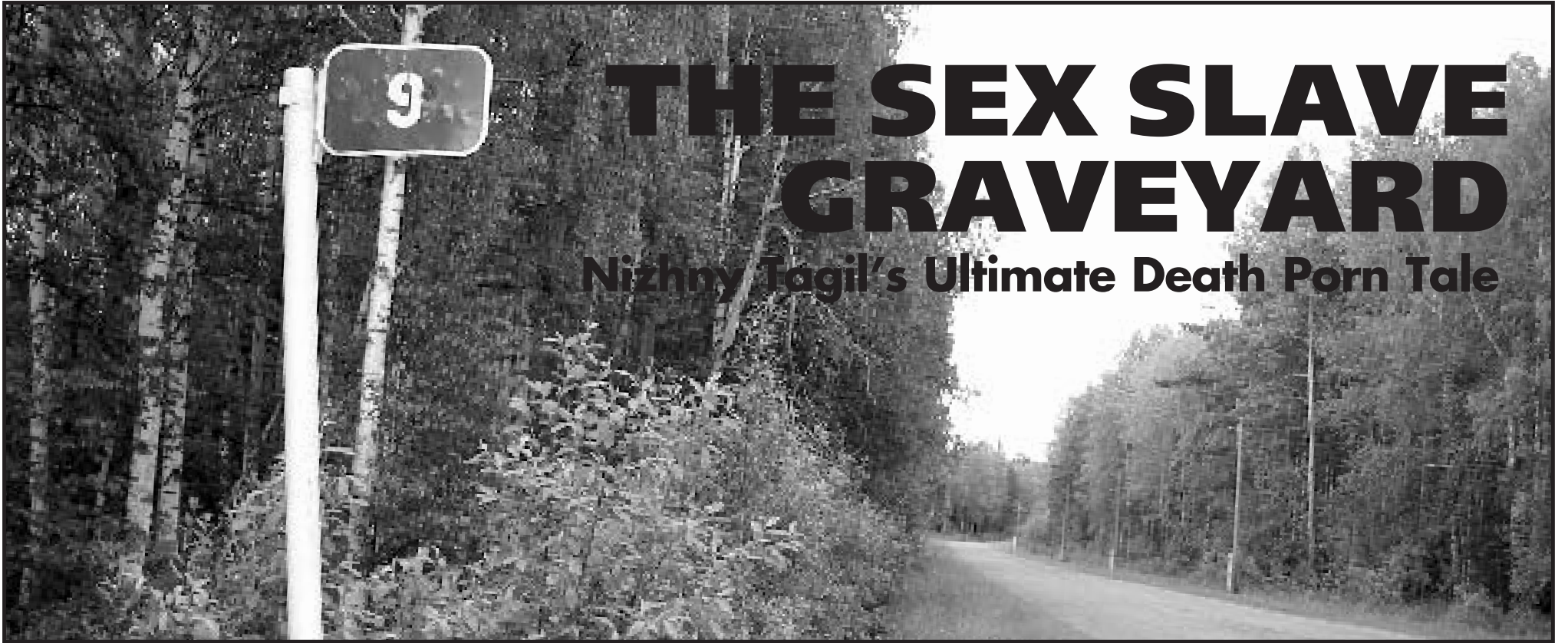


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THE SEX SLAVE GRAVEYARD

Nizhny Tagil's Ultimate Death Porn Tale

By Yasha Levine & Alexander Zaitchik

NIZHNY TAGIL — In early 2007, The eXile published a Death Porn story so shocking that it even knocked us out of our jaded seats. A mass grave containing the bodies of teenage sex slaves was unearthed in Nizhny Tagil, a harsh Urals city of 400,000 known for its mining and its prison colonies. Even by Russia's brutal crime standards, this story stood out. The victims were linked to a local prostitution ring that had been kidnapping, enslaving and killing local girls for five years — and no one in Nizhny Tagil even knew it was happening, or cared.

While the Bittsevsky Maniac was working on his Chikatilo rerun, earning top billing in the Russian press and beyond once he was caught, the forgotten teenaged Sex Slaves of Nizhny Tagil were killed a second time over, as the world decided that their story wasn't "sexy" compared to the Bittsevsky Maniac (and let's be honest—he was a cliched ass even by serial murderer standards of ass). Most Russian papers merely allotted an in brief-sized blurb to report on the mass grave discovery. *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, the paper that broke the story, was the only one that really got into the horrific gore and cruelty of this amazing Death Porn crime.

Tatyana Sudakova, the editor of the Yekaterinburg edition of *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, told The eXile, "When I went Nizhny Tagil right after we published the material, I thought that people would be up in arms, demanding accountability, grieving for their daughters. But it was the complete opposite. People acted as if nothing happened....I began to think that there was some conspiracy I wasn't in on. I know that many men and officials have used prostitutes themselves. It wasn't in their interest to speak up because they themselves could get in trouble for something."

We decided that this story warranted more than a snide Death Porn report. It had to be told—and seen—in all of its ugly details.

Incredibly enough, we managed to get Penthouse magazine interested in buying the story, which gave us the necessary funds to investigate it. So we headed out to the Ural Mountains, the divide between Europe and Asia, to the town of Nizhny Tagil, where Khodorkovsky was supposed to be imprisoned until the authorities changed their minds and put him in Siberia instead.

The story began five years ago when Eduard Chudinov and Igor Melizhenkov scraped enough money

together to start their own prostitution business. They purchased a couple of apartments in downtown Nizhny Tagil to serve as the brothels, and, posing as a beverage distribution company, they registered their business with the city to give it a sense of legitimacy.

The two were natural businessmen and understood that slave labor would do wonders for their profit margins. They recruited a baby-faced buddy of theirs named Mark Kustovsky to act as their human resource manager. He just had one job to do: scout the city for vulnerable young girls who could staff their whore operations.

Kustovsky's job wasn't so easy. But Kustovsky proved to be a natural at sniffing out vulnerable young girls and charming them into prostitution; he even seemed to enjoy his job. He targeted girls from broken homes, orphans, girls with alcoholic fathers—the younger the better. He had a romantic streak which helped him to earn the girls' trust slowly, and develop it to his needs. Even though the job was purely commission-based, he took his time, sometimes dating these girls for months before handing them over to Chudinov and Melizhenkov.

Unlike other sex slave operations, Chudinov's crew didn't seem to use drugs to domesticate the girls. They preferred to break them the old fashioned way: with violence and fear. If beating and rape didn't work, they simply killed the girl and dumped her body.

In the span of four years, anywhere from fifteen to fifty local teenage girls wound up dead and buried in the grave outside of Nizhny Tagil. And yet, no one seemed to notice.

Even the police didn't know they had a serial killing operation on their hands until a guy picking mushrooms with his dog stumbled upon the corpses. But instead of going public with this gruesome discovery, the cops tried to suppress it. This would sound familiar to seasoned Death Porn readers, who might recall a story in 1997 when an ax murderer terrorized a tiny Russian village, and the cops ignored it, even when victims stumbled into the local police station with hatchet wounds in their heads. The Bittsevsky Maniac operated with impunity from police as well; indeed the cops even forced one victim who survived to recant her story in order to avoid the hassle of paperwork.

The mass grave in Nizhny Tagil was the same story. It took the police a full year to break the case, during which time the people of Nizhny Tagil had no idea that a gang of savage pimps was plucking their daughters off the streets and forcing them into a slaughterhouse for profit.

* * *

Irina Kuzmin was eating a corn dog when she met the man who would deliver her into the arms of a monster.

Dusk was falling when 16-year-old

Irina and her twin sister Marina were hurrying home from the trade school where they studied to become secretaries. It was November 2004, and arm in arm, they struggled against the fierce westerly winds that roll down into the Russian industrial city of Nizhny Tagil from the nearby Ural Mountains. Bitten by the cold, they ducked into a corner store to buy a snack and warm up. When they emerged, a young man approached them. He zeroed in on Irina.

"You're so pretty," he cooed. "Won't you give me a bite of your corn dog?"

The man introduced himself as Stas. He wore a dirty black raincoat, scruffy white sneakers, and a tattered beanie pulled down to his eyes—but he acted as if he were wearing an Armani suit. He looked directly into Irina's eyes and complimented her long eyelashes and the sheen of her jet-black hair. She recoiled when he placed a hand on her shoulder and chided her for wearing such a light jacket in early winter. "It's so thin, I can practically see through it," he joked, throwing her sister Marina a wry smile.

Stas's large, luminous blue eyes were, Marina recalled years later, "a little hypnotizing." Within minutes of their meeting, Stas had found a topic of common interest—a new bowling alley in the center of town—and soon the three were chatting. Stas talked rapidly, asking about their age, where they studied, and where they lived. He said little about himself. The only thing the girls could get out of him was that he kept a chicken coop in the back of his house, which explained his soiled clothes. Stas said he was 19, although the wrinkles around his eyes and his weathered skin hinted at a much older man. People age quickly in Nizhny Tagil, but the Kuzmins hadn't met many teenagers who were this slick. The sisters were intrigued, but sensed something wasn't right. Eager to get rid of him before they reached their apartment building, Irina agreed to meet him the next day at the local movie theater.

Stas cleaned up for the date. His ratty clothes were gone, as was his pushy manner. He arrived with flowers, dressed in black—clean slacks and a tucked-in dress shirt. He tickled Irina with compliments as they strolled through a barren winter park. It was her first real date, and the attention made her swoon. Telephone calls followed, then a second date, and then longer talks on the phone. She didn't return home from their third meeting. Irina was never seen again.

Irina's disappearance wasn't just another isolated tragedy of a sort all too common in post-Soviet Russia. Police would eventually link her murder to the deaths of more than a dozen missing girls. Like Irina, the other girls had vanished without a trace over the course of the last five years. Most were found two years ago in a shallow earthen pit in some woods

north of Nizhny Tagil—a mass grave of teenage girls. But despite the gruesomeness of the discovery—some of the bones found belonged to the accused murderer's 15-year-old daughter—the story sent only a faint and fleeting shudder of horror through Russia's crime-jaded public. Roughly 1,000 missing-person reports are filed every year in Nizhny Tagil alone; most are for young girls. What's one more?

"Stas" was really Mark Kustovsky, who took this gig to supplement his income from his job at a local iron-works factory. It meant working for a local gang headed by a hulking 45-year-old thug named Eduard Chudinov ("Edik," to his friends) and his buddy, Igor Melizhenkov. For each girl he handed over, he'd get anywhere from \$20 to \$500. "The better the merchandise," Kustovsky later wrote in a confession, "the more I got."

Once Kustovsky's girls were handed over to Chudinov, they were offered a choice: Accept a life of prostitution, or join Uncle Edik for a private picnic in the woods north of Nizhny. Those who accepted were kept as prisoners in their own city, sometimes only blocks from their homes. Those who rejected the offer would take a ride with Edik or his henchmen and learn that the picnic menu was limited to rape, torture, and strangulation.

According to Chudinov's videotaped confession, which the police encouraged Marin to watch, most of the girls were dumped in a mosquito-infested clearing adjacent to a forest swamp, about 30 miles south of

Nizhny Tagil. The mass grave is just a few minutes by foot from the main road and one of its distance-marker signs, which features an ominous bullet hole from a high-caliber gunshot. Chudinov's hometown, a bleak mining settlement called Lyovikha, is just a few miles away. If any place could produce a man like Edik Chudinov, it's Lyovikha, a rusted and isolated Soviet-built housing project that looks more like a Nazi labor camp.

"There's a lot of violence here, especially on the weekends," said Oleg Masgalin, an unemployed 20-year-old Lyovikha resident whose scabbed-over knuckles and clean-shaven head bore the marks of a recent brawl. "I'd say at least one person gets murdered here every month. What do you expect? Most people here have never spent a day sober in their entire lives."

Even by Lyovikha's brutal standards, Chudinov stood out. He is six-foot-two, with a thick Neandethal eyebrow ridge and an almost comically small head atop his massive shoulders. Chudinov looked like something between Andre the Giant and Sin City's Marv. He was born for intimidation and damage.

At 34, Chudinov left Lyovikha for the relatively bright lights of Nizhny Tagil. He left behind his wife and infant daughter, Lena, whose body would eventually be found in the mass grave. In Nizhny, Chudinov became a successful petty thug, involved in numerous shady businesses. But in 2002, he struck out on his own.

Chudinov borrowed some money and bought a couple of large apart-



"Last month a guy got stabbed to death by another guy that wanted to take his car for a joy ride."
Oleg Masgalin, 20, unemployed Lyovikha resident

ments in downtown Nizhny Tagil, a rundown area defined largely by its nondescript Soviet housing blocs and small, cheap clothing shops. According to Kustovsky's confession and reports from Rinat Nizamov, the journalist who broke the story for Russia's *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, Chudinov told his buddies to find girls; he'd take care of the rest. Kustovsky was his best man. Chudinov hired muscle to guard to keep them in constant fear and guard them around the clock. When a girl lost interest in her job, he would personally apply the necessary pressure.

A week after Irina's disappearance, Kustovsky put in one last call to the Kuzmin household. Still calling himself Stas, he asked for Irina as if nothing had gone awry. But Marina says she suspected him immediately. After all, he had taken her sister on a date to the bowling alley the night she didn't return home. But Kustovsky was so seemingly confident of his innocence, he even agreed to go to the police station with Marina and her older sister Olga. Kustovsky showed up in a good mood, wearing a blue Adidas tracksuit—the standard uniform of a Russian street thug. The cops didn't know him, but they made small talk and joked with the alleged kidnapper.

"It was obvious to everyone in the room that something wasn't right," Marina says. "He admitted that he had liked to my sister about his name and age." And yet the cops still didn't consider Kustovsky a suspect, Marina says. He was allowed to waltz out the door, while the police scolded the sisters for being paranoid. She'll turn up sooner or later, they said.

In a Western country, the way the police bungled the missing girls's cases would be a major scandal. "The way this crime was handled shows the whole system needs to be rethought," says Nizamov. "The cops did nothing for years, then tried to cover it up because the truth made them look so bad." The 19-year-old reporter's February 2007 series of stories in the *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, Russia's most widely read paper, was the first public account of the scope of the crime. It forced a reluctant police force to begin releasing details of the case. These details were as embarrassing for them as they were heartbreaking and enraging for the families of the dead. (Police refused our many attempts for comment, but as the case unfolded they denied any incompetence. In a press conference held by Nizhny Tagil's deputy prosecutor, Oleg Panasenko, Panasenko said, "I wouldn't say our efforts were completely hopeless.")

Like other families of the missing, the Kuzmin sisters found themselves in a bureaucratic nightmare of incompetence and indifference. Marina says Irina's case not only changed investigators seven times in six months—one retired, one took an extended vacation, another became ill—but in July, the police lost Irina's casework. The folder containing the statements and contact information on Kustovsky simply vanished. Everything had to be collected again. Of course, there was very little in the folder other than what the Kuzmin sisters had supplied.

Eventually Marina stopped asking the police about her sister. She knew how they saw it: Missing girls are a dime a dozen in Nizhny Tagil. They're messy cases, solved about half the time—mainly when the missing return on their own. "I had no faith in the police," Marina said. "I knew my sister was never coming home—at least not alive."

Almost a year after Irina's disappearance, Marina says her older brother Misha got a call from the police. They accused him of killing his sister so he could claim the apartment their recently deceased parents left as inheritance. Misha denied the charge, but the cops brought him in to see what they could get out of him. They locked him up for 24 hours and threatened him with more jail time if he didn't sign the confession they had prepared for him. He refused. Then they moved in on Marina.

Marina says she was tending the strawberry patches in the front yard of her grandmother's country house when a patrol car rolled up. The cops seemed cheery, claiming to have new information about her sister's disappearance at the precinct. They told her to get in the car. They finally have a lead! she thought, feeling the first flicker of hope she'd had in months. But once they arrived at the police station, the cops changed their tune. "They accused me of knowing where my sister was," Marina recounted. "They wouldn't take no for an answer."

She says the cops even tried a crude version of the good cop/bad cop technique, which they no doubt grabbed from some Hollywood movie. "You know where your sister is! Tell us or we'll put you away for a long time, you cunt!" one yelled, threatening to smack her upside the head. The abuse lasted for 12 hours and was repeated the next day. Getting nowhere, the cops ended the interrogation session and kicked her out on the street at 1 A.M.

Marina Kuzmin was no weakling—she had already endured the death of her parents, who succumbed to disease months before her sister's disappearance—but these provincial Russian cops finally broke her. "I was shaking when I left. When I got home I couldn't stop crying. I couldn't get over it for weeks," Marina said. "I feared the police as much as anyone."

In May 2006, more than two years after Irina's disappearance, the Kuzmins got a call from the prosecutor's office in Nizhny Tagil. They were asked to come identify a missing girl's belongings. There was no mistaking the purse, shirt, and shoes—they were Irina's. The prosecutor said that she was murdered on the day of her disappearance in 2004—strangled with a rope and dumped by the side of the road near a town called Novyansk, roughly 65 miles north of Nizhny Tagil. Although a missing-person's report was already on file when the Novyansk police found her body a few days after the murder, Marina says the police didn't bother checking to see if anyone was looking for a girl with Irina's description. When no one came around looking for her, local authorities buried her anonymously, about an hour's drive from her family home.

Irina's body became part of a broader criminal investigation into the deaths of 15 other girls from Nizhny Tagil girls. At the center of the investigation were eight local men led by none other than Chudinov. It seems the case had been broken more by luck than diligent police work.

Marina says that the prosecutor gave her an unexpectedly candid off-the-record explanation of how the police cracked her sister's murder. (This version differed from the official story released less than a year later, when news of the mass grave surfaced in the press).

In April 2006, Marina said she was told, a 32-year-old Nizhny Tagil woman had a falling out with her husband and decided to let her hair down for a weekend. She struck up an acquaintance with Chudinov, Kustovsky, and the rest of the guys at a seedy local nightclub called the Caspi, a basement bar favored by the town's criminal underclass. She proceeded to party with the crew for two days. When she returned to her husband, she covered for her infidelity by claiming she had been kidnapped and raped by a gang of men. Her husband demanded that she file a police report, so she did—against her new friends, Kustovsky and Chudinov. Kustovsky's name was then cross-referenced with other investigations. When it came up in relation to Irina's disappearance—roughly two-and-a-half years after he first came to the police station with her family—he was asked to come in for questioning.

This time the cops were less friendly. Kustovsky was initially reluctant to talk, the prosecutor Nizamov told Marina, but after what was likely a severe beating, he gave away the whole crew, recounting the gory details of the sex-slave operation.

Chudinov was hauled in next. He

denied everything at first, but after being presented with overwhelming evidence and allegedly being beaten by the police, he caved. (Months later, Chudinov and Kustovsky would complain to the prosecutor about the constant beatings they endured in jail from fellow inmates. They didn't think they'd make it to the trial alive.) In his videotaped confession, as described by Marina, he sits stone cold and emotionless, taking slow drags from a cigarette as he discusses his "business." He weighs each question and gives detailed answers.

As reported in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* and corroborated by Marina's reports of Chudinov's confession, the first thing he said he did to the girls once Kustovsky and other recruiters delivered them was try to break them. He threatened them with death. If that failed, he savagely beat and raped them. Those who continued to resist were killed. Many of the girls were beaten for hours. The mercy kill could be days later. If all of this left Chudinov too tired to dig a hole, he simply covered the girls with sticks and brush, leaving the fresh corpses to the animals. Two of the girls he killed were forced to first write letters to their parents saying not to worry, they had run away to Moscow.

A successful escape could bring down the operation, and runaway attempts were not tolerated. Nizamov recounts the story of Masha, a teenage survivor of Chudinov's sex-slave ring who made it as far as the street below the brothel before she was dragged back upstairs. She was then forced to wear an iron pot on her head, which Chudinov banged repeatedly with a metal stick for hours, rendering her permanently deaf.

"Kuzmin, she got lucky," Chudinov calmly told police. "The other girls took a long time to die. We broke their legs and arms before finishing them off."

The operation worked smoothly for five years: Girls kept going missing and the bodies kept piling up. In a statement, Nizhny Tagil's lead prosecutor for the case said that 15 murders had been linked to Chudinov's crew through admission and evidence. But sources close to the police say the real number of bodies could be as high as 50. The problem main problem was identification. By the time forensic experts arrived at the scene, many of the body parts were picked apart and scattered by wolves, rats and birds.

Despite the horrific details and wide scope of the crime, the story barely registered a blip on Russia's scandal wire.

Even in Chudinov's hometown of Lyovikha, where he was a regular face, the news of a nearby mass grave stocked by a native son was taken in stride. There was no candlelight vigil; no national soul-searching. "We heard it on TV," says one Lyovikha resident. "Sure, we thought it was terrible, but it wasn't such a big deal. Most people didn't react to it."

Nationally, the story was buried, lost among the sprawling country's daily blood-spattered "In Brief" items—each of which would provoke weeks-long obsessions on CNN's Headline News if they occurred in the West. According to a 2001 U.N. study, Russia had the world's highest murder rate among all major industrialized nations. There are 28,000 people murdered in Russia every year, roughly 11,000 more victims than in the U.S. (which has a population double that of Russia). This might help explain why even after the police shut down Chudinov's brothels, the surviving girls have chosen to remain silent. Not a single one has come forward to speak about her ordeal or work to prevent it from happening again. These girls are just statistics. And few people take the time to listen to teenage girls—especially ones viewed as runaways who turned to drugs and prostitution.

Just as details of the Chudinov case began to appear in local papers, Irina Volkovna said her 16-year-old daughter Katya disappeared. She was last seen getting into a white BMW outside her trade school, located next to the Caspi.

Katya reappeared a month later, her clothing ripped, stumbling around the



"Of course the girls themselves are to blame for what happened to them." Olya, 19, studying economics (right)

"Yeah, Tagil girls will hang out with any *malchik* who'll buy them drinks and stuff." Nadia, 19, studying economics (left)

Nizhny Tagil train station in a drug-induced haze. Someone recognized her and called her mother. At the hospital it was determined that she had a near-lethal dose of benzodiazepine—the active ingredient in Valium—circulating through her veins. At first, Volkovna says Katya couldn't even remember her own name. In the following days, she began piecing together bits and pieces of her memory: She had met a man and gotten into his car. She was drugged and spent the next month as a barely conscious sex slave. She had been forced to wash cars in her bikini, live in tiny quarters with other girls, and sleep with men. But that's all she claimed to remember—no names, no addresses.

Katya disappeared in January, when the Chudinov crew was already behind bars. Someone else was likely running the same racket, possibly

with another grave site. Katya, who somehow managed to escape from her captors, was in a unique position to help bring down that operation. But she refused, showing no sympathy for the girls still imprisoned. "Let their families take care of their own problems," Katya told her mother. But had she attempted to press on, the local police would've been right there to stop her. As soon as Katya returned home, the police forced her mom to close the investigation into her daughter's disappearance.

"Nu chto? She came back didn't she? Why does it matter how?" the cops reasoned.

"I don't think the cops bad," Irina said. "I just think they are incompetent and don't know any better."

A version of this article first appeared in the February 2007 issue of *Penthouse Magazine*. X

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COLD WAR REPORT 2008 PREVIEW

Russia and the West in the Year of the Rat

By Alexander Zaitchik

Two thousand and eight is the year of the Rat, and 2007 was the year of Fun when it came to Russia and the West. Oh, how we laughed! Daily new threats were hurled, dark comparisons made, and old treaties shredded and replaced with new weapons programs. In the biggest yuck of all, Ed Lucas got a book deal.

At times it was hard to tell what was going on. Putin compared Bush to Hitler; everyone compared Putin to Stalin. But still they went fishing. In the West the year began in a haze of Litvinenko hysteria and ended with a sober reconsideration of Putin, Time magazine's Person of the Year. In Russia the year began with talk of targeting EU nations with mid-range nukes and ended with the nomination of Dmitry Medvedev, the modernizing relatively pro-western teddy bear among Putin's possible successors. Between the bookends there were a lot of sparks around America's plans for missile defense in Europe, the Kremlin's tightening control over everything at home and its influence abroad, Western support for an independent Kosovo, Russia's nuclear cooperation with and arms sales to Iran, American meddling in Russia's near abroad, Russian meddling in its own near abroad, the list goes on.

If things seem calmer on the new cold war front than they did sixth months ago, it's temporary. All of the 2007 flashpoints are still flashing, most of them bigger and brighter, and the trend lines haven't changed. Missile defenses in Europe are still on the boards. So is NATO expansion. Most important, a showdown over Kosovo is around the corner.

The Kremlin set the tone on its end when it assigned Dmitry Rogozin to the post of NATO ambassador, the Russian equivalent of Bush sending John Bolton to the UN.

Everything is in place for a memorable and exciting year of clashes between the world's biggest nuclear-armed powers. Let the new cold war games begin!

KOSOVO

The main event. It's gonna happen this year, and it's gonna get heavy. If 2007 was the year of missile defense mayhem, 2008 is the year of the Kosovo clusterfuck. Sometime in the next six months, Albania Jr. is going to stand up in a poorly tailored suit, quote Thomas Jefferson, and declare itself an independent statelet with an economy propped up by Scandinavia and a 24-hour Western Union office. The West will beam with nervous pride and support their new infant ally at the UN. At which point, Pandora, meet Pristina. What happens after the inevitable deadlock in the Security Council is anyone's guess, but you can forget about this summer's Putin-Bush Siberian fishing vacation farewell tour.

It's hard not to conclude that the whole thing is a dangerous and unnecessary Western power play. In the long-running negotiations you've never heard about, Belgrade long ago agreed to give Pristina what amounts to de facto sovereignty, including the right to field its own Olympic teams. The only things Belgrade won't grant Kosovo is the right to set an independent foreign policy. But the West is about to give it to them, even though it risks turning a Russia-West flashpoint into a fire. Which may just be the point. There appears to be a hardcore faction of new cold warriors salivating at the chance to use

Kosovo to push relations with Russia to a breaking point. Speaking of an "inevitable confrontation with Russia," Janusz Bugajski of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington recently argued that military force may be needed if Serbia or anyone else acts "irrationally" in response to Kosovo's declaration of independence, which some say could come within weeks. The irony of all this is that if there's one shit hole on earth not risking another war over, it's Kosovo.

EUROPEAN MISSILE DEFENSE

Kosovo will get the headlines in early to mid-2008, but this one ain't going anywhere. The Democrats managed to slash funding for European missile defense in '08, but its full steam ahead until '09, when a potential Democratic president will have to pry the program from the Missile Defense Agency's dead cold fingers. Look for deals to get signed with Prague and Warsaw by spring so they can break ground and get building before the next administration gets any funny ideas about pulling the plug.

The year opens with bilateral talks in full swing between Washington and Prague/Warsaw. If it seemed like the Czechs and Poles were getting cold feet last year when they put the brakes on negotiations, they weren't. Both governments were just playing hardball to get everything they can out of Uncle Sam in exchange for becoming targets for midrange Russia nukes. It looks like Poland was holding out for its own Patriot battery or THAAD system; the Czechs just wanted a bigger cut of the action for local contractors. But final deals are around the corner. All eyes on NATO's Bucharest summit in April to see how far Washington has been able to drag Old Europe along for the ride.

JOHN MCCAIN

As long as McCain's in the race, expect more jabs at the Kremlin. The funny thing is that the senator from Arizona isn't even a new cold warrior, he's 1.0, the real thing: a Commie-cursing Curtis Lemay-era bred Eagle Scout who still thinks Gorbachev has something up his sleeve and who still refers to "Czechoslovakia." McCain the POW may have put his Vietnam demons to rest, but the old man still has a Russia bug up his ass the size of a tennis ball. In a GOP debate in Orlando, McCain warned that Moscow was causing "severe" problems for the U.S. and promised "tough times ahead." If the Bush-Putin era is replaced by a McCain-Medvedev match-up, it's real easy to imagine things getting off on the wrong foot and staying there.

THE ARCTIC SCRAMBLE

The weirdest front to open up last year in the new cold war. Everyone knew there was hard-to-get oil up there, but before anyone understood what was happening, Vladimir Gruzdev was planting a titanium Russian flag on the Arctic floor and Canada was talking tough for the first time since the Mad Cow beef bans. Who knew Denmark even had a Navy? The five Arctic nations are all



The Arctic shelf flag: Risk expands to the ice shelf.

increasing their military presence in the area despite the fact that the nobody knows how to handle the legal, geological, or environmental questions raised by competing claims. This is a multi-generational slow-burner, so don't expect much Arctic action in '08 besides more melting. As they say, Developing...

THE BRITISH COUNCIL CLOSINGS

You can sprinkle polonium in their Earl Grey, but don't fuck with their British Councils. By closing the St Petersburg and Yekaterinburg Councils on charges of links to MI6, Moscow is playing with fire. The lavishly funded and smartly designed educational resource centers are Britain's most important weapons in their rearguard cultural battle for relevance on Planet Hollywood. Forget Litvinenko. Where are Russian teens going to find week-old copies of the *Guardian*-on-a-stick and DVD's of *Sense And Sensibility*? Who will put a stop to the madness?

UKRAINE, GEORGIA, NATO

How far will the open-door policy go in '08? January opened with Ukraine's Foreign Minister traveling to Brussels to personally hand in a formal request to join NATO's Membership Action Plan. Kiev appears intent on catching up with Georgia along the road to full membership, even if only 20 percent of Ukrainians think it's a good idea. Will this be the year NATO completely loses its mind and takes in Ukraine and Georgia? Once more, all eyes on Bucharest this April.

WILLIAM KRISTOL

Ever since William Safire retired, there hasn't been any real heartfelt Russia-bashing on the *New York Times* op-ed page. There's been some serious hand wringing and some half-hearted expressions of concern, but no high-caliber bear hunting. That should change with the arrival of William Kristol, who the *Times* has signed up for a one-year contract. Kristol is a founder of the Project for the New American Century and doesn't have a lot of patience for countries with interests that don't align with Washington's and the weapons and will to pursue them. His *Weekly Standard* has outsourced the new cold war drumbeat to a preening minicon freelancer named Michael Weiss. It's hard to imagine David Brooks getting worked up over anything except his next book advance, so expect Kristol to get tough with Russia in the *Times*.

But the Grey Lady still won't be able to compete with the Pravda on the Potomac, the New England Patriots of new cold war hysteria.

Iran

As this goes to press, the third Russian shipment of fuel rods is arriving in Iran and all the big foreign ministers are planning another meeting in Berlin to talk sanctions. Tehran, meanwhile, is not only continuing to build Bushehr, but is planning to build 20 nuclear power stations. Then there are Russia's billion dollar-plus advanced weapons sales to Tehran. But there doesn't seem much Washington can do or say about any of it. There were rumors after Putin's rare Caspian Sea summit sit down with the Ayatollah that the two were going to announce some sort of mutual defense pact, but that didn't happen. Will Russia go to the mat over Iran in '08 if the Bushies want to go out with a bang? Who knows, but we can't help but remember that in the British nuclear war film *Threads*, the fictional crisis leading to war between NATO and Russia starts with a crisis in Iran a lot like the one the folks at RAND are war gaming these days.

CONVENTIONAL FORCES TREATY

Moving into '08, the West still hasn't ratified the new version of the CFE treaty, citing Russian troops in Transdneestr, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia. Russia says the issues are unrelated and the West must sign the amended treaty before it rejoins the fold. Nobody on either side is rushing to do anything about the stalemate. It'll be a while before there are any serious practical effects in terms of tanks and troop movements, but one day we'll all see the collapse of the CFE for the catastrophe it is. The new inspection season starts in March; expect the West to ask for Russia's forces data and for Moscow to do nothing. Prediction: Unmoved chains and more shrugs in '08.

TRANSDNESTR, ABKHAZIA, SOUTH OSSETIA

Will '08 be the year the "frozen conflicts" of the ex-bloc thaw into a muddy geopolitical shit stew? Will Kosovo be the trigger? Will Boney M. be sent back to provide a disco soundtrack to the peace talks? Will Russia withdraw troops from these uppity breakaways in exchange for Western ratification of the amended CFE Treaty? So many questions, so little interest. X



Dmitry Rogozin: Russia's answer to John Bolton.

GIRLS OF THE 5TH DUMA: BABEAGE WINS

By Mark Ames

There are a lot of things wrong with President Putin's "sovereign democracy" project: vote fraud, a rubber-stamp Duma that is essentially a one-party body, bla bla bla. But nothing is more vexing than the fact that Putin's mangling of Russia's fragile democracy makes Bush and Cheney look almost heroic, like a pair of pinkish Nelson Mandelas by comparison.

The only reason those two don't come off as the slippery fascists they are is their incompetence. Putin knows how to crush his democracy smoothly, without causing too much fuss or damage. But Bush and Cheney are the Keystone Cops of the democracy-crushing club, a running buddy duo slipping on banana peels at every Abu Ghraib, Gaza Strip, or Guantanamo Bay they try to impose upon the world, leaving nothing but chaos and ruin in their wake.

The chaos they created has had the unintended effect of allowing a few last remnants of democracy to survive

in parts of America. Putin would have known how to kill of American democracy in a humane fashion, with the population's acquiescence: 60 percent of America is solidly fascist and anti-democratic, and 83 million Americans believe that the End of Days is right around the corner, so it's not like anyone outside of coastal California and New England would miss their democratic rights. Even Twain realized this over a century ago, and it made him dream of "tidal waves of blood" in one of his novels.

None of this makes Putin any better. They're all part of the same global elite running a similar anti-democratic, anti-masses playbook, it's just that Putin is like Bill Walsh, and Bush is like my Pop Warner football coach, who forfeited our playoff game because he forgot to order a bus in time.

All that aside, there is one area of Russia's sovereign democracy that we believe compares favorably to American democracy. An area that, head-to-head, puts America to complete shame.

I'm talking about the Dyevs of the New Russian Duma. That's right. This Duma's list includes girls who

flash their tits for *Playboy* and *Maxim* magazine, and even smaller outlets. And most of their tits deserve to be in magazines! Russia's Duma babes have the kinds of breasts that OJ would kill to keep, not the sorts of shriveled-pastry-bag tits that you'd find on a Jane Harmon or a Jean Schmidt--creatures whose very names cause impotence.

Interestingly, some Russian media outlets, like Vokrugnovosti.ru, reported that it was on Putin's own directive that the Duma was stacked with some *Playboy* babes. Whatever you say about Putin, he does have a good eye.

Contrast the way the women in the new Duma look to the Congresswomen on Capitol Hill, and it's like going from Lothlorien to Mordor. It's not that America's Congresswomen are ugly. Most Americans are ugly, and it takes an ugly person to chew his or her way into politics. What's so striking about the Women of the American Congress is how fucking freaky they look: not of this world, this time, this point in evolution, no matter what side of the aisle they're on. Shelley Berkeley and Marcy Kaptur look like vice principals from the 1940s, with the same

hairdo and taste in clothing that the slit-necked counselor in *Beetlejuice* had. "House of Horrors" (as opposed to the Duma's House of Whore-rs) is an apt description. Most Congresswomen, look like ghouls. I thought that women with that 1940s look died out by the 1980s, that Reagan was the last of their kind. Apparently not.

When US Congresswomen aren't looking like the undead, then you have women like defense-industry-tool Jane Harmon, whose years in the California sun have turned her face into a wrinkle-for-wrinkle replica of my scrotum. The underside of my scrotum, to be exact. After I've dropped 50mg of extended release Adderall.

Another elitist is the goggle-eyed Republican Mary Bono Mack, who has this "so that's what happens to the sorority chair when she gets old and vain" look. Mary's the late Sonny Bono's wife, one of four Congresswomen who owe their jobs to their husbands' untimely deaths (or in Sonny's case, slapstick deaths), meaning in this House of Horrors, it's literally the zombie-wife who takes a lethal bite of flesh from her husband's

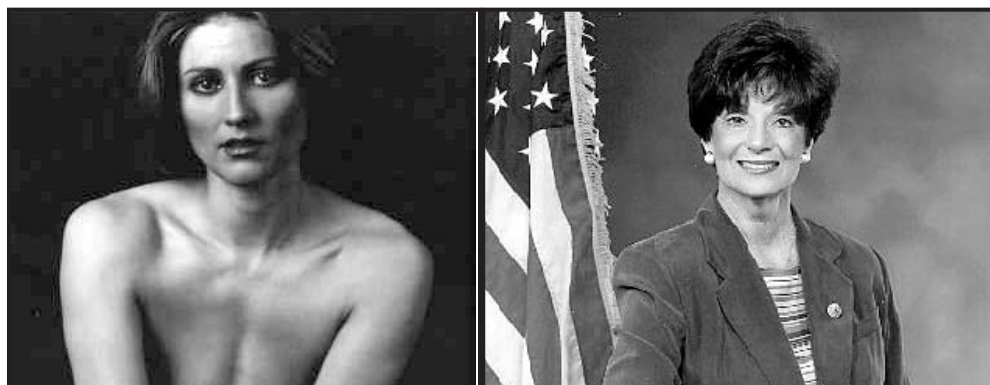
neck who advances. Only nowadays Mary's a Bono-Mack, owing to her power-marriage to Connie Mack IV, who is distinguished not only as the son of Rep. Connie Mack III (son of Connie Mack II), but also because if you take one look at IV's hilarious Guy Smiley portrait, you understand why he's the odds-on favorite to be the next anti-gay Republican who finds himself at the center of a Cambodian-boys/Crisco-oil/GHB scandal.

Then there's the scariest ghoul of them all, Jean Schmidt, the notorious Ohio Republican who called former Marine John Murtha a coward, whose shriveled evil-witch features seem so awful as to be fake, like something from a bad straight-to-video horror flick.

There it is: in two heavily degraded democracies, the choice is this: American democracy, which has a few rights left which no one exercises, and a collection of the most physically repulsive bipeds in the Western Hemisphere; or Russian democracy, which has no real rights, and is run like an open business, but at least offers some eye candy. X



Duma deputy Alina Kabaeva (left) poses for Maxim; Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (right) looks like an aging Soviet transvestite who's hoping one day to make the cover of *The Daughters of the Revolution* newsletter.



Duma deputy Svetlana Zhurova (left) strips off her shirt for Russia; US Congresswoman Shelley Berkeley (right) stiffens her Reagan-era hairstyle for that PTA board member look, a real hit in her Ohio district.



Duma deputy Natalia Karpova (left) goes topless for her countrymen; Jean Schmidt (right) goes bloodless.



Duma deputy Svetlana Khorkina (left) flashes her perfect palm-warmer mammaries for *Playboy*; withered Congresswoman Jane Harmon (right) smiles thinking about her next corporate golf game.

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TAKE AMERICA'S NAVY BATTLE GROUP...PLEASE!

By Gary Brecher

FRESNO, CA — Today I'm going to talk about war games. Which reminds me: my computer's messed up so I'm writing this column from what has got to be the darkest, smelliest internet cafe in Fresno, not like there are a lot to choose from. I seem to be the only roundeye in the place, and I'm definitely the only one here who didn't come to play combat games. All around me are these huge explosions and the screams of the wounded, all fuzzy from the cheap speakers beside every machine. I don't even know what games these guys are playing—I don't do fantasy games—but they sure are serious

stupid. I just wish the NY Times would pay me some kind of settlement instead of ripping me off six years late. If you're going to steal, fellas, at least do it right. I don't break into your Manhattan HQ to pilfer your back issues for toilet paper, so don't steal my 2002 columns just because your military correspondents are brain-dead from decades of believing DoD briefings.

(Editor's Note: This isn't the first time that the NY Times has lifted from the War Nerd. Last May, the popular Fishbowl/NY blog suggested that Times columnist/editor Nicholas Kristoff plagiarized from Brecher's idea that Cheney must be an Iranian mole because he's doing their business so well: <http://www.media-bistro.com/fishbowlny/newspapers/di>

THE WAR NERD

about it.

What's really weirding me out though is the way this Asian guy to my left always ends his game. Every time, there's a huge explosion and then a serious voice saying, "The terrorists win." Every time! Does Homeland Security know about this treasonous game, poisoning the minds of America's yout' with defeatism? And how come the terrorists keep winning?

Which brings me (nice segue, huh?) to the big-boys' war games I wanted to talk about, the ones the US Navy just conducted near the Iranian coast in the Persian Gulf. And I'd like to thank all the readers like Aaron Champion who wrote in to link me to the story and remind me that I've been proven right again. Damn, I'm tired of always being right, because it's always about the bad news. In this case, Aaron wrote to give me the heads-up that six long years after I predicted Iranian irregular naval forces in small civilian craft would make an American fleet in the Persian Gulf look foolish, the glorious NY Times itself lowered itself to repeat today what I'd said way back in 2002. Here's Aaron's message:

Dear Mr. Nerd,

I'm a longtime reader of your column and it wouldn't surprise me if you've already seen this:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/12/washington/12navy.html?ref=todaypaper>

But if you hadn't, allow me to stroke your ego (and ego alone) by making pointing out that you're the only motherfucker in the world that seems to have picked up on this. It only took the press five years. Adding insult to ineptitude, it was the *New York Times*.

Hope this brightens an otherwise bleary in Fuckno for ya.

Aaron

Well, Aaron, it did, kind of. Nothing makes me happier than when the people who get the respect and money I don't get, wind up looking

[d_times_kristof_steal_war_nerds_dick_cheney_iranian_mole_column_59158.asp](http://www.exile.ru/articles/detail.php?ARTICLE_ID=6779&IBLOCK_ID=35))

If you're a new reader you might need to know that way back in December 2002 I did a column called "U Sank My Carrier!" about the results of "Millennium Challenge," a US Navy war game in the Persian Gulf. Here's the link to that column:

http://www.exile.ru/articles/detail.php?ARTICLE_ID=6779&IBLOCK_ID=35

What happened in Millennium Challenge is that the Navy brass picked a prickly retired USMC vet named Paul van Ripen to play the Iranian commander facing a naval incursion—and van Ripen, with nothing but small speedboats, civilian prop planes, and low-tech surface-to-surface missiles, managed to sink two-thirds of the US force by buzzing them with annoying but not openly hostile civilian craft, then attacking simultaneously with everything he had.

I made two important points in that column. The first is that war's entering a new phase where blurring the line between civilian and military isn't just an accident or cheating but crucial to any irregular force facing first-world attackers. It's how they win.

My second point, the one I got a lot of flak for, was that if we send our old-fashioned carrier battle groups into the Gulf in wartime, they won't come out. They'll make excellent dive sites after all the coral and urchins and other sea critters have colonized them—the Gulf is nice and shallow, so our ships will be resting in really prime diving depth—but they won't come out alive.

Well, durned if the Iranians showed they'd learned from van Ripen even if the US Navy refused to. To celebrate the new year, the neocons decided to send another battle group into the Persian Gulf. And guess how the Iranians reacted. Yup: they sent a bunch of small "civilian" speedboats to harass the frigate screen, zipping and zooming in the US Navy's



USS Sitting Duck, the world's most expensive raft

wakes. Waterskiing for all I know, just having a great old time trying to provoke the USN's close-in defense systems into a massacre that they could play for the home audience, tapping into that gigantic Shia lust for martyrdom.

Of course Cheney or whoever else ordered the fleet into a shallow death-trap like the Gulf was playing the same sleazy game, just with a bigger budget. The only possible reason to send a US fleet close to the Iranian coastline right now is that Cheney and his friends are desperate to provoke a war with Iran fast, before they have to leave office.

And it's harder for them than ever

for strategic purposes is a classic part of war, and besides, the idea of draft dodgers like Cheney caring what happens to an ordinary squid blasted into fish food by a suicide evinrude attack is just ridiculous. They're coldblooded, which is good for a war chief.

Unfortunately they're also stupid. And the Persians aren't. That bears repeating: the Persians are NOT stupid. In fact, they've always been the craftiest people in the Middle East, because they can yell as loud and act as crazy in public as any Arab—but when it's necessary they can also instantly calm down and plan quietly, a smile on their faces and a dagger

and no-account as dropping "boxes in the water." See, every "box" is potentially a mine, and there's nothing that full-braid Naval officers hate more than mines, because of all the ways you can wreck your ship, steaming onto a floating bomb is maybe the most embarrassing.

See, the Navy brass always plans for a neat, clean hi-tech war. Their real investment isn't the Phalanx or Aegis but the operations rooms deep in the hulls where flabby desk jockeys just like me sit at little screens. Those screens are supposed to show a few dots, nice fair-fighting Soviet surface ships and subs. That's how the Navy wants to play the game.

Damn, I'm tired of always being right, because it's always about the bad news. In this case, Aaron wrote to give me the heads-up that six long years after I predicted Iranian irregular naval forces in small civilian craft would make an American fleet in the Persian Gulf look foolish

now that we have a new-and-improved Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates. Rummy bought into all their neocon crap—hell, he was their main wizard!—but Gates doesn't. He pissed off the neocons bigtime at a news conference I just read about by calling Iran a "challenge" instead of a "threat." That may not sound like a big deal to you, but to the Admin crowd it's enough to get you burned at the stake, like calling Jesus "a nice man" instead of "my personal savior" to the churchy crowd.

So there's the US Navy trolling the Gulf trying to draw Iranian fire, and there's the Iranian speedboats trying to draw US fire, like a couple of street whores winking at each other. Naturally, no business resulted because they both want the same thing: an enemy provocation. If you're thinking this means the VP was willing to risk US casualties to get his Iran invasion, you're right, but I hope you're not surprised. In the first place, sacrificing a decoy force

under the table.

If the Mullahs in Tehran had wanted a provocation, they could have made one phone call and all those annoying speedboats would have beelined for our frigates at ramming-suicide speed. But Persians are patient; they know that Cheney will be gone in a year, so why risk an invasion? Not that they're afraid of a US invasion; in fact, if they were just typical Middle-East crazies, they'd be scheming to get invaded ASAP. But they don't NEED us to invade right now, which means they feel pretty confident things are going their way without any added aggravation. After all, we just conquered Iraq for them; why not let us bleed out there, with no risk to Iran, then walk in when the US Treasury is empty?

So what the Iranians did was waterski around the fleet and drop "boxes in the water." That's a quote from the Navy's report. The Navy seemed especially pissed off about an enemy who'd do something as low

Seeing their beautiful screens clogged up by a bunch of goddamn cheap speedboats full of Revolutionary Guards, not to mention hundreds of "boxes" that might turn out to be mines, ruins everything.

You might wonder, if you were real, real naive, why the Navy hasn't tried to learn from what van Ripen did to them six years ago in the same waters. Well, the truth is that no big, well-funded armed service learns or changes until it absolutely has to, which usually means when it starts to lose a war. And of all services, navies are by far the most stubborn, old-fashioned, snobby, retarded of all. I don't mean the submarine force, which is pretty much God. I mean the brass in their ridiculous floating targets, aka carriers, frigates, tankers and other dive-sites-in-the-making.

If they had any sense they'd realize that the way to deal with big overloaded targets is to saturate their defenses with a swarm of low-cost attackers. If you've got lives to spend, and the Iranians sure do, you spend lives to sink hardware. It's a good trade, when you consider what a carrier costs, and how little the average Iranian life is worth. They're Shia! These guys can't wait to give their lives away. The Kamikazes were squeamish moderates compared to the Revolutionary Guard. And thanks to Silicon Valley and its Chinese knockoffs, you can fire swarms of unmanned rockets instead of Shia martyrs, so you don't even need to spend one life per blip on the US fleet's little screens. You can even send empty rocket tubes as part of the swarm, because in the few seconds the surface vessel has to react, it can't



Pick on someone your own size! This multibilliondollar US Navy warship is no match for a \$250 Iranian suicide-speedboat

determine which threats are nuke, which are conventional HE and which are decoys.

Of course the Navy will come back with buzz words like Aegis and Phalanx. The Phalanx is a good system, if everybody was still playing by those Warsaw Pact vs. NATO war games. Phalanx, for you rookies, is an automated close-in defense system mounted on the decks of USN surface vessels. It looks like that Star Wars robot R2D2, if R2D2 had a huge penis hanging down that was a multi-barrel 20mm cannon. The R2D2 part houses the radar and computer; the gatling gun spits out 20mm rounds at low-flying SS missiles, incoming speedboats, or diving kamikaze planes.

But the Phalanx was never meant to handle swarms of low-tech attackers. That's not the clean, temperate-zone war the computer dweebs in the Pentagon planned for. See, the original Phalanx only had 1000 rounds in its magazine. The newer models have 1,550, meaning even the USN realized that it was too easy to saturate the target with decoy attacks and deplete the magazine. But 1550 rounds isn't much at that rate of fire—and the Achilles heel of the system is reloading. It's not that easy to hoist 1550 20mm rounds into position, and I don't think either van Riper or the Iranians would be likely to agree to a 15-minute reloading break.

If it was me, and maybe I'm too "cynical" or something, I'd send all my empty missile tubes and expendable suicide squads in the first wave, all at once like van Riper did. I'd count to 90, because 90 seconds would be enough to empty every Phalanx magazine—and you can bet that those scared Navy computer nerds down in the Operations Room

would be holding the red buttons down till the barrels were melting when they realized they were under a real attack. Then, while the grunts below deck were hauling the ammo into position, I'd send the second wave with the real stuff. And that, as they say, would be that. A trillion dollars of US Navy hardware becomes

gentlemanly fists at a bunch of Iranians in Islamic jet-skis, Cheney's propaganda corps was filming the whole ridiculous encounter to try to convince us on the home front that this proved we gotta invade now, right now. This is where they showed that their real talent is for comedy, even though they don't realize it.

Fresno in your 1971 Cudas, remember it wasn't me that coined that name, it was a bunch of merchant sailors and squids. So go wait at the gate of Mare Island and slice up a chief petty officer on shore leave, don't take it out on Brecher.

You know, in some way this whole episode in military history is like one

While the Navy was shaking its gentlemanly fists at a bunch of Iranians in Islamic jet-skis, Cheney's propaganda corps was filming the whole ridiculous encounter to try to convince us on the home front that this proved we gotta invade now, right now.

an artificial reef.

If I'm wrong, US Navy bosses, why don't you show the taxpayers how invulnerable your battle groups are? Bring van Riper out of retirement and give him the Iranian weapons mix, including speedboats, small planes and soviet-clone antiship missiles. Set up an automated frigate somewhere where we can watch, and let us see that Phalanx knock down every single bee in that sting-swarm.

Of course the Navy won't ever stage a test like that. It'd be like asking Benny Hinn to walk on water. You're not supposed to put your god to the test, and Navy brass really do think they're God. Something about all that "tradition" and bullshit etiquette on "the bridge" goes to their heads. You're supposed to trust them. And give them all your money so they can pretend it's still 1880 and the dreadnought rules the waves. Besides, Navy officers were always "gentlemen," and there's nothing as totally useless as a gentleman.

While the Navy was shaking its

To show how dangerous Iran was, the Navy released a tape of a heavily-accented voice on the radio who supposedly threatened the fleet in the Gulf. If you heard this tape, you have to laugh: "I am comink to blow you up, America!" Ooooooh, really scary stuff! That's supposed to scare the most expensive naval force in the history of the world?

Some hairy CB retro nut out there in the Gulf whiling away the time sweating in his radio shack hoping to get an answer 30 years after everybody else gave up CB: "Uh, Breaker, Breaker, this is Greaseball Slacker One-Niner givin' y'all the big Islamic word that y'all is about to get blowed up real good, Good buddies!"

To add to the shame, it turns out the voice wasn't even coming from those scary Iranian Bayliners. Turns out the Navy got punked by a dude (or group of dudes) known and hated by every vessel transiting the Gulf under the name "Filipino Monkey." And before you Flips up in San Jose get your butterfly knives out and drive town to

of those samples rappers make. You'd start out with some video of the fleet zooming around the Gulf with the Iranians zipping in their wake in small outboards. You'd run that backwards and forwards a few times while that video-game voice repeated, "The terrorists win!" Then you'd sample the Filipino Monkey's voice that scared the admirals so much, going, "I am comeenk to keeell you America!" a few times, then the apologetic network correspondents saying over and over, "...now appears to be a radio prankster known as 'Filipino Monkey.'" Run that a few dozen times: "Filipino monkey! The terrorists win! I am comeenk to kill you!" Put it on random, switch the order around, zip the video of the fleet at keystone kops speed, and you've got the big picture: the Gulf of Tonkin incident replayed as comedy. That's the world from 1962 to 2008, kids: history repeating, first time tragic, second time comedy. Not good comedy—Cheney's no Henny Youngman—but definitely slapstick. X

DOUG STEELE: THE COMEBACK KID

Exile readers flipping through this issue may have noticed the return of one of the staples of our esteemed publication's 11 year print run: Doug Steele's trademark Boar House ads are back. Only now it's getting a much-needed face-lift (and face-lightening), and renamed HOT DOGS.

This is good news not only for our paper, but for Moscow's expat community which our newspaper faithfully and humbly serves. The once cohesive "expat scene" has fractured considerably since Doug left (or was edged out?) of the Boar House, the expats' center of gravity up to then.

But after Doug left about a year ago, the Boar House went into a steady decline that accelerated towards the end, finally convincing the owners that it was time to once again "call in the professional."

With Doug back in his perch, the freshly-madeover Hot Dogs should once again unite expats and heal the painful rifts that have wracked our community, as evidenced in the terrible Expat.ru/Redtape.ru Wars. More than that, it should be a fun place to hang out, with great drinks, food, live music, a good crowd, and "approachable girls."

Moscow is a town of incredible highs and lows, creating a kind of accelerated Darwinism that quickly weeds out the weak and faint of heart. McCain schmuckain: Doug Steele is the real comeback kid. And all our lives will be the better for it.

Unless of course Doug offers you a shot of absinthe. X

The advertisement is set against a background of a dense grid of small, square images. At the top, there are logos for Absolut Vodka, Smirnoff, Jim Beam, and Pepsi. Below these, the text "Zemlyanoy Val, 26 Tel: 917 0150" is written in a stylized font. The main headline, "HOT DOGS", is written in large, bold, pink letters with a white outline. Below this, the text "are coming!" is written in a similar style. The phrase "The Grand Opening of Moscow's Best Foreign Bar" is written in a curved, pink font. The date "Feb. 01, 2008" and the time "Friday, 19:00" are also included. On the right side, there is a large, close-up image of a dog's face, looking towards the viewer.

THE HAND THAT COUNTS THE VOTE

By Kirill Pankratov

Those who cast the votes decide nothing. Those who count the votes decide everything." That was Stalin's famous line summing up his attitude towards the electoral process. Today it rings just as true as when Stalin came up with that sinister aphorism.

Relevant in more ways and more places than one thought imaginable. Remember the 2000 US elections, "too close to call?" How was it eventually decided by the Supreme Court and the Florida electoral commission? The Supreme Court is in theory a non-partisan, objective and wise protector of the law. In reality its vote was cast strictly along party lines (5 Reps, 4 Dems). No miracle of objective judgment was evident – it was all about who managed to place more of their cronies into the heart of the System. Moreover, the controversial election went down in Florida where the brother of the "winner" just happened to be that state's governor, and the head of Florida's elections process just happened to be a like-minded Republican.

Had irregularities like these occurred in any other country, it would be denounced as a terrible example of dirty elections and massive corruption in a pathetic banana republic. Not that this doesn't describe the actual case of today's USA.

But let's turn to some of the most recent examples of shady elections. In the last two months there were two elections in the former USSR countries: in Russia and the Republic of Georgia. The Russian Duma (parliamentary) elections were held on December 2, 2007. It was, as they used to write during the Brezhnev years, a "triumph of Soviet democracy." Russia, to say the least, doesn't exactly have a stellar record of clean elections. But this time it was simply grotesque. The ruling United Russia party swept the ballots with 64% of vote. The only "opposition" that got into the Duma were two leftwing parties – stale Zuzanov's communists and a newfangled Kremlin's creation Just Russia. Its leader, Sergei Mironov, is an old ally of Putin. He ran in the presidential elections of 2004 with the only goal (by his own admission) of helping the Kremlin legitimize the elections in case all other candidates withdrew at the last moment. Oh, yeah, and of course Zhirinovskiy's "liberal-democrats," often painted as scary fascists in the western media, but in fact are harmless court jesters well past their prime. This year the party included on its election roster Andrey Lugovoi, whom Britain considers a prime suspect in the Litvinenko poisoning. Guess the chances of Lugovoi's extradition to the UK moved from "in your dreams" to a timeshare vacation at a skiing resort in Hell.

Russia's "liberal" opposition parties such as the SPS (Union of Right Forces) and Yabloko barely registered in the final count, with slightly more than 1% of the votes. And that was probably the least fraudulent figure. The liberals have been gradually losing public support for years, ever since their glory days in the late 90's. You would think that at this point, by the 2007/8 elections, they would have changed their strategy, revamped their leadership and tried to appeal to more mainstream voters. Instead they taken on the role of what's called now "demshiza" – democrat/schizophrenics: the town-square loons, noisy but irrelevant.

And another thing was glaringly obvious – the massive, blatant fraud

in many provincial districts used to pad United Russia's vote. Aside from all the signs of manipulating voter lists and the final vote count, there was indisputable statistical evidence of outright fraud. The voter turnout histogram shows a very strange picture indeed: a roughly even distribution with a maximum of around 60%, but after a decline near the 80-90% level, a sharp rise again around the 100% turnout figure (see, for example, <http://oude-rus.livejournal.com/52935.html>). The regions which had supposed 100% turnout levels also had a very high incidence of near-100% voting in favor of United Russia.

There can be only one explanation of this phenomenon: In about 5 to 10% of the districts the results were purely artificial, with nearly 100% turnout and nearly 100% vote rubber-stamped for the United Russia. Most of these statistical anomalies occurred in backward ethnic republic and enclaves where separatist activity is still hot, such as Chechnya and Ingushetia. It is obvious what happened there: the local elites were given pretty much a free reign to steal and misrule, as long as they deliver votes for the ruling party. And many of them don't know how to be subtle about it. So they massively overdid it to the point where it was obviously stolen.

There was another obvious anomaly: the turnout numbers in many districts were very close to multiples of 5%: 65, 70, 75 and so on. It was truly despicable: these fraudsters were so crude that they didn't even have the brainpower to mix it up, instead sticking with easy 5% intervals.

Ironically, just after the Russian election there was another one – the presidential vote in Georgia. Remember "the bright spot in the post-Soviet space"? The "Western-leaning," "courageous reformer" and all the other accolades showered on President Saakashvili in the Western media?

So when push came to shove, were Georgia's elections really all that different from Russia's?

The presidential elections in Georgia were originally scheduled for the end of 2008, but circumstances changed. Saakashvili's popularity plunged throughout 2007 due to rising prices and rampant government corruption. On September 28, Tbilisi was shaken by a massive demonstration of over 50,000 protesters against the government, the largest in its recent history—much larger than the crowds during the Rose Revolution.

One of the main opposition figure – the former defense minister Irakli Okruashvili – was promptly arrested and charged with treason and corruption. Shortly before his arrest, he accused the Saakashvili regime of massive theft and mismanagement. After being "worked on" in prison (remember, "waterboarding is not a torture" and other Bushworld wisdoms) and having his family reportedly threatened, Okruashvili recanted and issued a bizarre and unnerving television statement, like something you'd expect from North Korea, confessing that he was wrong and Mishiko (Saakashvili) was a great president.

A few days later Okruashvili managed to slip out of the country, after which he confirmed that his earlier statements were made under duress. He repeated his earlier accusations against Saakashvili. Later, in Berlin, Okruashvili was arrested following a request by the Georgian government, which is now trying to extradite and imprison him again.

This is oddly reminiscent to what Putin did in 2000 to Vladimir Gusinsky – the oligarch who controlled the opposition channel NTV.

Only Gusinsky had it easier – after transferring his shares of the heavily indebted Media-Most holding to Gazprom's control, he was let out of jail and out of the country, and hasn't been bothered much since then (in fact he still has some media assets in Russia). Okruashvili, on the other hand, is still pursued by Georgia with much greater vindictiveness.

The reaction in the Western media was telling: at most a few scant articles expressing mild concern and disappointment with their hero Saakashvili, totally unlike their reporting on Gusinsky, who, in the eyes of Western journalists, went overnight from a dirty manipulator to the Great Defender of freedom of speech in Russia.

But back to our cute little Georgia. The September 30th protests in the capital Tbilisi were followed by even larger demonstrations on November 2, with more than 100 thousands protesters demanding Saakashvili's resignation and new elections. The demonstration was brutally crushed by the police (wearing bizarre "Mickey Mouse" gas masks, and using LRAD sound weaponry imported from America). The protesters were gassed, beaten, and showered with cold water. Many were arrested. The crackdown was incomparably harsher than whatever the OMON did against the smallish

opposition demonstrations by "Other Russia" in 2007. When Garry Kasparov was briefly arrested, the Western media went into a hysterical condemnation orgy against "Putin's fascist regime." In case of Georgia, it was at most calm disapproval and schoolmarmish tsk-tsk finger-waiving.

Meanwhile, Saakashvili imposed martial law and shut down Imedi TV (partly owned by Rupert Murdoch), the only real opposition TV station in Georgia. Then Saakashvili made his big move. He rescheduled the presidential vote for January 5, 2008, allowing less than two months for the election campaign (in fact barely one month, considering that martial law was only lifted at the end of November).

During the campaign, Saakashvili held almost total control over Georgia's electronic media. Like in Russia, Georgia's opposition lacked a charismatic figure that who could unite all the disparate forces and wage a serious challenge to Saakashvili's grip on power. His victory was pretty much assured from the start. Yet, even considering his level of control, it was a fairly close call. Saakashvili officially received about 52% of the votes, just enough to avoid a second round, which would have been very humiliating for him.

Just like in Russia, electoral fraud was rife in Georgia's elections. In many cases it seemed that Saakashvili stole his entire plan from Putin's playbook. For example, Saakashvili gained most of his support not in the capital Tbilisi, where too many observers were, but rather in the ethnic regions near the Armenian and Azeri borders with ethnically mixed population, places where his Georgian-nationalism and anti-Russian rhetoric should logically lead to less support than in Georgia's heartland, not more.

Matyas Eorsi, the head of a monitoring group from the Council of Europe, endorsed the election despite obvious signs of massive fraud, noting: "I would like to make a plea to all political actors to respect the legitimacy of the election for the stability of Georgia." It's as if he said, "Let's please close our eyes and pretend it never happened."

Which brings up a post-Cold War corollary to Stalin's saying about elections: nowadays it doesn't matter whether elections are free and fair, it's how we declare them, for whatever expedient political need at the time of the sham elections.

Can someone remind me again what the Cold War was about, and who really won in the end? X



Saakashvili says: count this, bitch!

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THE THIRD SIGN OF THE POST-PUTIN APOCALYPSE

By Alex Shifrin

This week I witnessed the third sign of the post crisis Russian apocalypse. I arrived in Moscow in the spring of 1998. When I got here, the scene reeked of undeserved success and sex. It was an exciting time, but I always had this feeling like I just arrived at a party at 11pm, and something really cool happened a half hour ago which I missed, and everyone else was still talking about it. It was cool to be there, but I definitely wasn't there when "that thing" happened. Then, almost as if a twisted blessing, The Crisis™ hit. Man, that was a hell of a time. It's like someone hit the reset button on the big Atari we call Russia,

vendors at Gorbushka hide their pirate wares under their countertops. They'll still offer you pirate DVDs, they just won't have them on display for a few days while the authorities tour some WTO committee exec to show them how Russia's situation is improving. GE Money bank, Alfa Bank, Raiffaisenbank, most of the major local and international players began to invest heavily in promoting their programs. Anything from television, to outdoor, direct mail, internet, point of sale, and so forth. Finding credit options is now as easy as opening your eyes.

The second sign of stability: Automated parking on Tverskaya.

Up until end of last year, parking in Moscow was a much heated issue. Some years back, Mayor Yuri Luzhkov announced that parking was free to anyone who left their car on the street. This created an opportunity for groups of independent parking attendants, who would approach you after you've parked your car, and told you that they'd "watch" your vehicle for a few rubles. You were, of course, not obligated to pay them, but your car would be assured to remain safe should you decide to hand over some money. In addition to this petty extortion, it meant that parked cars blocked up sometimes two to three lanes of traffic



and Pitfall started up again from level 1. From devaluation, to expat exodus, leading up to Russia's version of the missing link a la the new businessmen, decadence, face control, a rebirth of chauvinism, a tightening of federal powers, through to better engineered social architecture, leading right up to the revised baby boom of today, I've been here all the time.

Now, anything as spectacular as the last 10 years obviously has a lifespan, and one needs to watch for this. Well, I'm here to put say on record that I know the three signs of the death of post crisis Russia, and the third just aired last week on MTV.

Russia's never been a place that can do anything in moderation, and when it was in the throes of a financial crisis, it pulled out all the stops. Conversely, should "stability" ever rear its ugly head in this land, it won't come in the form of comfort and prosperity. I don't believe this place has the inner convictions to truly allow its citizens (i.e. others) to feel at ease and free. The Russian model of stability will come in the form of near-religious Puritanism, aimed at focusing the population on production, output and controlled expression with the goal of maintaining the highest possible prosperity for Russia's power play makers. Work hard, shut up, make babies. Simple as an MTS campaign. When the post-crisis Russia finally kicks the bucket, I want to be making plans to get da flock outta here. Right now, Russia offers all the benefits of a banana republic, without the nice weather. Once the fun bits are gone, well, what's the point?

The first sign of stability: The proliferation of credit and mortgage advertising.

This began to take place just over a year ago. Credit isn't anything new, and The eXile did a great job of covering the instability of Russia's new ubiquitous credit trend. The offers and ads hit hard. Credit booths are even found at Gorbushka, Russia's largest pirate CD/DVD and electronics market. If you haven't been there, you need to make the trip just to see this. It's very well organized, with hundreds of indoor booths, well renovated, selling the latest Hollywood blockbusters, sometimes before they're even released in North America. On occasion, the authorities make a show of cracking down on intellectual property violations, and the

either side of a road. Recently in an effort to cash in on this lost potential revenue, Moscow's authorities finally introduced municipally designated parking zones. No, this does not mean that they built any additional parking garages (although they have introduced tow trucks recently), instead they rounded up all the parking thugs and told them that some turf had to make money for the man. In an effort to make this look civilized, Moscow's authorities recently planted automated parking machines on Tverskaya Street, the main drag in Moscow. The whole ruse gives the impression of legitimacy.

The third, and final, sign of stability: Pampers advertising on MTV.

In recent articles, I highlighted how Russia's feds have made it their priority to up the country's birth rate. This has met with such staggering success that Moscow's elite and hipster communities have traded their lap dogs for something just as small: infants. (You might recall I wrote about people bringing their babies to a Playboy Playmate of the Year.)

MTV, which boasts the Music Awards, and some of Moscow's most touted hype and glitter events, has recognizably readjusted its demographics priorities. Not too long ago, even as far back as December, MTV was pushing ringtones, travel, sex and Dima Bilan. Now, it's Pampers Sleep and Play diapers. And it's not a light rotation. The spot gets repeat showings in commercial pauses, with heavy repeat placement.

What does this all mean? Well, it means that the third sign of the post crisis Russian apocalypse has finally arrived. The end is nigh and that means that Post-Putin Puritanism is just around the corner. And the thing about Russia is that when things change, they change pretty darn quickly. Whatever's coming, it's gonna be sharp bitch slap to anyone who's not ready, or decides to stand in its way.

So that's all, folks. Time to go home. Nothing more to see here. Move along, people. Move along. X

CELEBRITY RETARDS

By Nancy Deal



BLIND ITEM

Anna Nicole Smith may be dead, but the saga of her hot-mess-ness lives on in her offspring. It has been announced that baby Danielynn, the potential heir to the hotly contested fortune of Smith's late billionaire husband, is cross-eyed. It was the drugs, right? But pimp daddy Larry Birkhead has stated that the little girl's condition doesn't have anything to do with the inordinate amount of chemicals her crackwhore mother was ingesting during gestation. "...I point-blank [asked] every single doctor, 'Could any medications that Anna was on have caused

this? And they said that it's more likely that a genetic reason could have caused it.' Medications? Uh-huh. Is the jury really still out on methadone usage by pregnant women? In the meantime, Danielynn sports an eye patch to help correct her wonky eyes. She's totally the next Paris Hilton in training!

NON-OPERATING THETAN

The world found out this week that Tom Cruise was awarded a Freedom Medal of Valor by the "Church" of Scientology. The Internet was swimming

with leaked (and now pulled) video footage of the religious fanatic in what is widely claimed to be an indoctrination video for Scientology. Crazier than ever, Mr. Cruise's 10-minute video is essentially a bunch of gobbledy-gook that is even more bizarre than the couch-jumping incident, and possibly more painful to watch than his interview with Matt Lauer.

Tom rambles on incoherently, peppering his inane jumble-jamble with occasional maniacal laughter. He does what he can, the way he does everything... If you hate yourself enough to subject yourself to it, as of this writing the video has not yet been pulled from Gawker.Com.

BRITNEY FORGETS HER CORNCOB

http://x17online.com/celebrities/britney_spears/x17_xclusive_britneys_not_pregnant_period-01182008.php

For anyone who lives in a cave and missed it during the holidays, Britney Spears has gone officially, publicly, totally and completely batshit. Most are now speculating that she has a mental illness, including but not limited to bipolar disease and possibly even multiple personality disorder.

Blah blah blah. The news this week is that during her many visits to Ralph's grocery store and other hotspots like 7-Eleven and Starbucks, Britney pulled a Lohan and left the house wearing no pants. But pants weren't the only thing she forgot: Britney's monthly visitor apparently dropped by at a paparazzi-filled parking lot. Apparently x17 was the only website that was not above publishing the pix of Britney black-and-white-and-red all over. Celebrity gossips everywhere have been hypocritically balking at x17's lack of ethics in posting the pictures. Nigga please. Bitch loves this shit.

Britney's trail of blood put an end to the pregnancy rumors that started the day before when Brit-Brit and shady pap boyfriend Adnan Ghalib made a big deal of shopping for HPTs at the local drugstore.



THE US HAS SOMETHING TO OFFER YOU NOW, MOSCOW EXPATS!

After a recent pseudo-scandal triggered by photos showing her in suggestive, lesbian-type activity, fifteen-year old actress Miley Cyrus (aka Hannah Montana), the object of pedophile fantasies everywhere, got a makeover. The new look has sparked even more inappropriate comments by Lolita lurkers on the Internets with only one hand on the keyboard. Hurry up and stock up on Ya Sam baby lotion before she grows some pubes! X



SOAK UP THE SAVAGE LUST OF MOTHER RUSSIA!



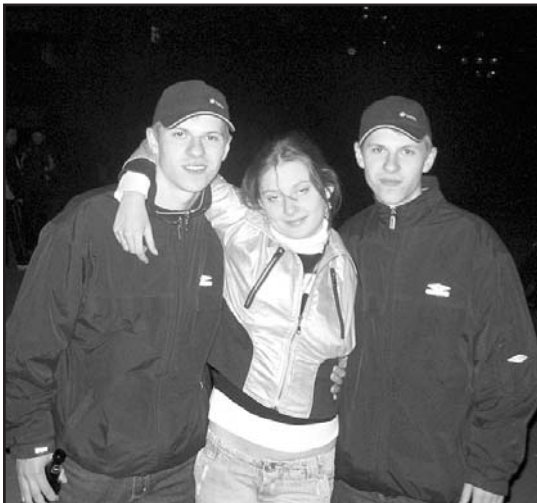
At the end of December, we'd have looked at these girls and grunted, "Eh. Whatever." Then we flew home for three weeks to America. Now we look at these girls and say, "We're sorry we took you for granted! You have no idea! It was horrible in America! Everywhere these large creatures called 'women' who snarled at us...but you two nubile goddesses...you're available! We will never foresake you again! Yay sovereign democracy! Yay Putin!"



This is why you don't want to wake up after a whore slips you a mickey inside your apartment.



The next indie trend: Chechnya merch.



True story: Russian academics recently found that girls who drink more are also more successful in their careers. This woozy student-dyev is pictured training herself for future office party date-rapes, the time-tested fast-track to career promotions.



Yes, Russian dudes really are lame enough to wear retro-70s wigs in 2008. But one could argue that their very lameness makes them "authentic."



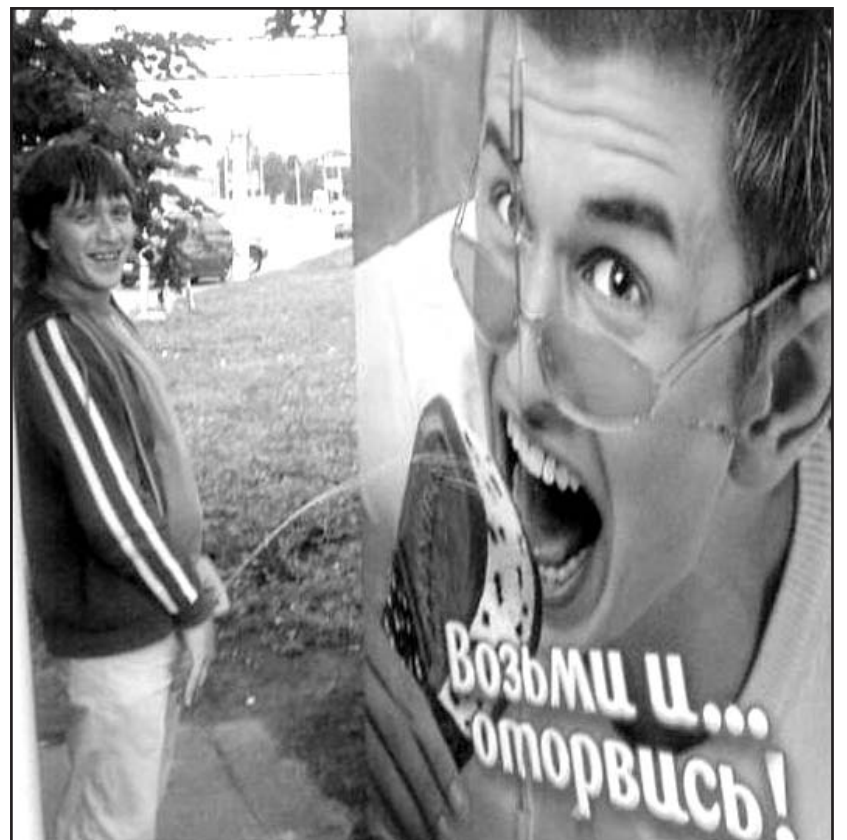
This girl is saying, "I don't know why there are so many pedophiles in Russia. I mean, we're just a bunch of innocent schoolgirls in uniforms squatting over stall-less toilets, looking up at you with an inviting, slightly scared expression. Our mothers teach us this. What's that got to do with pedophilia?"



Do not adjust your screen. What you are looking at is a gaggle of dyev students getting ready for a school dance. As the wind just discovered, they aren't planning to drink milkshakes tonight.



Normally we're against the whole breast implant thing, but this girl could sure use a pair of cancer-bags to take care of her waterballoon issue.



The ad reads, "Grab it... and let loose!" So the dude with the bilan grabs it...and the incredible thing is, by the time you read this, he's probably married with a baby, and got another chick pregnant on the side.

Email your photos of Mother Russia to face@exile.ru and win prizes!

THE FORTNIGHT SPIN



By Jared Lindquist
exileradio@gmail.com

The biggest news of the last fortnight (besides the shark-jumping article on Krizis Zhanra in the Independent) is that Russia is considering banning cigarette advertising. Why is this a big deal? Because if you've ever been to a gig here, you've noticed that Marlboro, Parliament, Chesterfield's or some other cigarette company has paid for your entertainment. "But wait," you say, "I paid nearly a hundred bucks to be pushed around by B1's bouncers and have to deal with their surly bartenders! Surely some of that money is going to my favorite band!" Doubtful. Promoters here aren't big on taking chances, and the tobacco money ensures they don't have to. Guarantees are met, bands are paid; everything else is cash in pocket. So the indie kids in the know are worried that without the tobacco money, the concert scene will just die out. On that happy note, let's see what Moscow's promoters are spending Philip Morris' money on this fortnight.

You may have noticed that **LED ZEPPELIN** had a very successful November reunion gig in London. There are even rumors of a huge world tour. In anticipation of this, or perhaps aware of Muscovites willingness to overpay for cheap knockoffs, we get **BOOT LED ZEPPELIN** (January 28-29, Apelsin, 19:00), who will spend one night covering Zep's 1975 tour, with the second night devoted to '77's tour, aka the bloated rock excess that spurred the creation of punk. If that wasn't enough, Russia's "best" Zep cover band, St. Petersburg's **THAT ZEPPELIN**, opens both nights.

My impressions of Tver were that of a shitty, dying town, from which nothing good comes. And yet, somehow the indie noise-rock band **MIAMI SCISSORS** (January 31, 16 Tons, 22:00) was born there. Although legendary German industrial band **EINSTURZENDE NEUBATEN** doesn't come to Moscow til later this spring, you can get a head start by catching long-time member **ALEXANDER HACKE** (February 1, Aktovy Zal, 21:00) with visual artist **DANIELLE DE PICCIOTTO**, who will be performing their

audio-visual epic, "The History of Electricity." Sounds intriguing, I know. Probably if you enjoyed the sculptor that **FAUST** brought along to their Faust gig last year, this is something that will interest you.

Everyone knows that the British music press loves to name next big things and then leave them by the wayside by the time they actually become next big things. The great thing about the internet, is that it allows any band to call themselves the next big thing, such as England's **KOOPA** (February 1, Krizis Zhanra, 23:00), a pretty average pop-punk band whose main claim to fame is that their single made it into the top download charts in the UK. Their songs poke fun at manufactured pop stars and popular girls. Obviously they're not getting points for originality. Local Krizis stalwarts **BLAST** and **MILANA** support.

Who said Russians don't understand irony? One of the city's hottest dance clubs is hosting a **GROUNDHOG DAY PARTY** (February 2, Rai, 24:00) featuring **BONEY M**. Maybe they really do get it, after all.

Remember how when you were in high school, every alternative kid in band class formed a ska band that used the genre name in the title? **SKAGINA**? Check! **SKAFARI**? You betcha! Strangely, it's a bunch of Germans who have come up with something that should be totally obvious to the locals: **MOSKOVSKAYA** (February 3, Tabula Rasa, 19:00). Just thinking about this makes me want to vomit.

In fact, if you're really looking for something to do, some way to get the aggression of Moscow's gray winter out of your system, check out UK metalcore act **BRING ME THE HORIZON** (February 3, Tochka, 19:00). Aggressive, loud, and demanding their fans mosh hard - nothing like beating up a couple teenagers to forget your problems.

Sadly, one of the things that Hurricane Katrina didn't wipe off the face of New Orleans was the jazz-rock fusion band **GALACTIC** (February 7, B1 Maximum, 20:00). Maybe someone here can sort things out for them.

Every year all of Moscow's stoners get together to celebrate Bob Marley's birthday at one of a variety of dreadlock-friendly events in town. This year the top one features British dub act **VIBRONICS** (February 8, Tochka, 19:00) along with lots of Russian acts. Sadly, this will probably not be a good place to score herb, although you can probably make some good contacts.

On the off chance you're looking for some nice traditional ska, Spaniards **THE PEPPER POTS** (February 9, Plan B, 19:00) are in the business of providing. Since forming in 2004, the band has shared a stage with such reggae and ska greats as **LAUREL AITKEN**, **DERICK MORGAN** and the **NEW YORK SKA JAZZ ENSEMBLE**. Locals **KINGS TOWN SOUL** open. X

TOP PICKS



MATT DIDEMUS (JUNIOR BOYS)

February 2, Ikra, 23:59
Ikra is still making a big deal about inviting Canadians to play at their club, and rumor has it that will result in **BROKEN SOCIAL SCENE** playing later this spring. In the meantime, we get a DJ set from **MATT DIDEMUS**, one-half of the hip Ontario electropop duo **JUNIOR BOYS**. The Boys drew influence from synth pop, minimal techno and UK garage, and are mentioned in the same breath as other hipster faves like **HOT CHIP**, **LCD SOUNDSYSTEM** and **THE KNIFE**. While the band isn't making an appearance, Didemus' DJ set will just have to tide over the fans for now.

BOSCH S TOBOI

February 8, Aktovy Zal, 20:00
I'll be celebrating Bob Marley's birthday by heading out to the middle of nowhere to catch ambient post-rockers **BOSCH S TOBOI**. Accompanying them will be locals **VOLENS NOLENS** and **SVET POD VODOI**, which ensures it will be a night of long, meandering songs that try to suck you in to their atmosphere. In other words, a good reason to show up stoned. Plus, this gig has the added advantage that you can probably smoke up at the show.



GARAGE DAY PARTY

February 9, Zhest, 22:00
Anyone hankerin' for a trashy rock'n'roll piss up would do well to check out the **GARAGE DAY** party. Featuring local garage and trash rockers such as **THE CAVESTOMPERS**, **THUNDERBIRDS** and **GULAG TUNES**, this should be hours of beer-soaked fun. Plus, you can stick around to dance from a DJ we can actually enjoy: **DJ SPY FROM MOSCOW**, who spins garage rock from the sixties and shit.

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February

MATT DIDEMUS / JUNIOR BOYS

THE EXILE

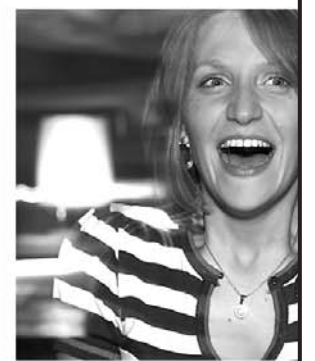
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FRIDAY January 25

ROCK
Stone Shades, French Whore
Named Babette, Blast
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra
Sunsay
21.00: Ikra
Suzi Quatro (US)
21.00: B 1 Maximum
Tracktor Bowling
21.00: 16 Tonn
Priklyucheniya Elektronikov
23.00: Tabula Rasa

JAZZ & BLUES
26 Gerts
23.30: Roadhouse
Jazz Piano, Jazz Sister
20.00: B-2
Arsen Shomahov
20.30: B.B.King

CLUBBIN'
DJs Jonny, Tuzov
00.30: B-2
DJ ZigZag
21.00: Kult
DJ Komotskiy, S. Peres & MC Kapustin, 4k, Paul B
21.00: Propaganda

SATURDAY January 26

ROCK
Sunsay
21.00: Ikra
Moralniy Kodeks
23.00: 16 Tonn
Undrwood
23.00: B-2
My Silver Revolver, Bright
23.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra
Garik Sukachev
21.00: B 1 Maximum

JAZZ & BLUES
Jazz Piano, Jazz Sisters
20.00: B-2
Old Fashioned Blues Project
23.30: Roadhouse
Yuriy Kaverkin & Dirty Dozen
20.00: B.B.King

CLUBBIN'
DJs Romashka, Vel, Onlee, Da Vinci
21.00: Propaganda
DJs Johnny, Tuzov
00.30: B-2
DJs Kovalev, Karina
20.00: Ikra
Anatoliy Ice
22.00: Kult

SUNDAY January 27

ROCK
Kimmo Ponjonen (Finland)
21.00: Ikra
In Flames (Sweden)
19.00: B 1 Maximum
Skalpel
20.00: B-2
Otomoto, Unseeing Eye, Malina Trip
19.00: Tabula Rasa

JAZZ & BLUES
Anastasiya Glazkova
21.00: B-2
Oen Blues Jam
18.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
Mighty Party: DJ Ahmed
23.00: Karma Bar
DJ Shum
20.00: Ikra
China Town, DJ Miami, Tony Key
23.00: Propaganda

MONDAY January 28

ROCK
Oxford
18.30: Tochka
Ten Smeha, Puttin Beatles
19.00: Tabula Rasa

JAZZ & BLUES
Jazz Piano
21.00: B-2
Dr.Nick
21.00: Roadhouse
Nastya Glazkova
20.30: B.B.King

CLUBBIN'
Latino non Stop
20.00: B-2
DJ Partyphone
21.00: Propaganda

TUESDAY January 29

ROCK
Dirty DeedZ, Karabasband,
Krasniy Svet, Transmit, Exlibris,
Via Makaron, Hahaus
18.30: Tochka
Changes, Invisible, Border, Ken Park, Feeding the Fire, Me to Me
19.00: Tabula Rasa

JAZZ & BLUES
Mihail Mishuris & Orchestra
21.00: Roadhouse
Haleo
18.30: B-2
Petrovich & Hot Rod Band
18.30: B.B.King

CLUBBIN'
DJs ZigZag, Anatoliy Gerasimov, Philla
21.00: Propaganda
Ja Vybz dj sessions
21.00: Kult

WEDNESDAY January 30

ROCK
Sansara
20.00: Ikra
Nefomat Festival
18.30: Tochka
Car Trush
21.00: B-2
Irlandiya, The Cotton, The Spa
19.00: Tabula Rasa
Modi
22.00: 16 Tonn

JAZZ & BLUES
Rocking Dad
21.00: Roadhouse
Edelveis
21.00: B-2

CLUBBIN'
Epik Soundsystem
21.00: Propaganda
DJ Spirin & Rock'n'roll Radio
21.00: Ikra
Rob Dirton
21.00: Kult

THURSDAY January 31

ROCK
ToI Miriam
19.00: Tabula Rasa
Miami Scissors
22.00: 16 Tonn
2H Company
21.00: Ikra

JAZZ & BLUES
Kukuruza
21.00: Roadhouse
Jeff Lorber, Chuck Loeb, Jimmy Haslip & Will Kennedy
20.00: B 1 Maximum

CLUBBIN'
DJs Studinskiy, Zorkin, Sanches
21.00: Propaganda
DJ Levskee
21.00: Kult

FRIDAY February 1

ROCK
Uma2rman
21.00: Ikra
Vopli Vidoplyasova (Ukraine)
21.00: B 1 Maximum

JAZZ & BLUES
Apple Jack
20.15: B.B.King
Raw Cats'88
21.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
DJ Komotskiy, Goldie (UK), Paul B, Subwave
21.00: Propaganda
DJs Johnny, Tuzov
00.30: B-2
DJs ZigZag
21.00: Kult
DJ Carlos
21.00: Karma Bar

SATURDAY February 2

ROCK
Mujuice
23.00: 16 Tonn
Zveri
21.00: B 1 Maximum
Moralniy Kodeks
23.00: B-2

JAZZ & BLUES
Dr. Agranovskiy & Cherniy Hleb

21.00: Roadhouse
Raw Cats
20.15: B.B.King
CLUBBIN'
DJs Romashka, Dolshik, Onlee, Da Vinci
21.00: Propaganda
DJs Basic, Tuzov
00.30: B-2
Home Listening DJs
22.00: Kult
DJ Ada
21.00: Karma Bar

SUNDAY February 3

ROCK
China Town
23.00: Propaganda
Bring Me the Horizon
19.00: Tochka
Moskovskaya
19.00: Tabula Rasa
Kasta
21.00: Ikra

JAZZ & BLUES
Open Blues Jam
18.00: Roadhouse
Anastasiya Glazkova
21.00: B-2

CLUBBIN'
DJ Ahmed
20.00: Karma Bar
DJs Miami, Tony Key
23.00: Propaganda
DJ Shum
20.00: Ikra

MONDAY February 4

ROCK
Klod & Yustas, Suhie, Pheromones, Mezhdu Not
19.00: Tabula Rasa

JAZZ & BLUES
Nastya Glazkova
21.00: B.B.King
Jazz Piano
21.00: B-2
Dr. Nick
21.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
DJ Partyphone
21.00: Propaganda
Latino non Stop
20.00: B-2

TUESDAY February 5

ROCK
Malina Trip, Maria Abort Chosen
19.00: Tabula Rasa

JAZZ & BLUES
Petrovich & Hot Rod Band
20.15: B.B.King
Mihail Mishuris & Orchestra
21.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
DJs ZigZag, Anatoliy Gerasimov, DJ Philla
21.00: Propaganda
Ja Vybz dj sessions
21.00: Kult

WEDNESDAY February 6

ROCK
Punk TV
20.00: Ikra

JAZZ & BLUES
Rattle Snakes
21.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
Rob Dirton
21.00: Kult
Epik Soundsystem
21.00: Propaganda

THURSDAY February 7

ROCK
Cheboza
22.00: 16 Tonn

JAZZ & BLUES
Galactic (US)
20.00: B 1 Maximum
Scolder Blues
20.00: B.B.king

CLUBBIN'
DJs Studinskiy, Sanches
21.00: Propaganda

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Vexille 11:00
I'm a Cyborg, But That's OK 13:00
Miguel and William 15:00
I'm a Cyborg, But That's OK 17:00
Across the Universe 19:00
I'm a Cyborg, But That's OK 21:15

31/01 - 7/02
New World 11:00
No Country for Old Men 11:00
Stop Breathing Festival 23:00
No Country for Old Men 13:15
New World 15:00
No Country for Old Men 15:30
Stop Breathing Festival 17:00
No Country for Old Men 17:45
New World 19:00

No Country for Old Men 20:00
Stop Breathing Festival 21:00
No Country for Old Men 22:15
New World 22:30

DOME CINEMA

25/01
Atonement 19:00, 21:00
26/01
Atonement 19:00, 21:00
American Gangster 14:00
27/01
Atonement 19:00, 21:00
American Gangster 14:00

35mm: Pokrovka 47/24, (Metro Chistie Prudi), 917-1883/5492 (answering machine); **Dome Cinema:** Olimpisky Prospect 18/1, The Renaissance Moscow Hotel, (Metro Prospect Mira), 931-9873 (answering machine); **Oktyabr:** Noviy Arbat 24, (Metro Smolenskaya, Arbatskaya), 545-05-05 (answering machine).

EXOTIC RUSSIAN VACATIONS

By *Dmitriy Babooshka*
pflanze@yandex.ru

I'm back to report the glorious return of Moscow's nightlife action. The New Year's *zapo!*, when everyone leaves for their dachas or some foreign country, is now officially over. I chose not to stay in town because going to Red Square on New Year's Eve with a bottle of Sovyetskaya champagne is no longer interesting for me. Instead, I've been meditating on life and my future plans, getting my thoughts and body organized, and this was the reason I skipped my last two columns. Hope you didn't miss me too much!

Among Moscow's "in the know" crowd, the place you chose to spend your New Year is itself a measurement for how cool you are, and now that everyone's back, they're all trying to impress each other about where they went.

I don't care about public opinion so much so I decided to be and went to see my aunt who lives in a small village in Karelia, next to Finnish border. I think I was one of the first downshifters who decided to stick to Russia and not exchange local joys for capitalistic debauch.

When I was on the way driving 2,000 kilometers in my Passat I was dreaming about unspoiled people who live in per-

CLUB REVIEW

fect village environment, breathe fresh air and eat clean food. Also I was dreaming about local beauties who I will seduce in the hayloft after showing my passport with Moscow registration.

Besides, I have never traveled to Saint Petersburg by car and I was inspired by the book of Alexander Radishchev—"Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow" where he described his adventures that happened more than 200 years ago.

Reality turned to be not so sweet as my dreams. First 200 kilometers were quite bearable but the way after brought me to thoughts that roads were not fixed since the German invasion.

Local truck driver who I talked to on the gas station told me that because of the bad roads the speed of traffic is quite low. This is what local bandits need. When they see the truck full of goods they use hocks to jump on it and throw the stuff to their car which follows the truck. Meanwhile, truck driver notices nothing.

I was impressed with this story thinking that Mother Russia has own James Bonds who misuse their talents. From the other side I thought some things would never change, as this kind of robbing on the roads was already known in Radishchev time.

Anyway, the road was the toughest part of my journey. When I got to aunt's village all worries disappeared. Locals treated me like tsar: I enjoyed great meals every day, endless visits to banya accompanied by never-ending bottles of samogon (self-made vodka) and generous attitude from village dyevs. I even didn't have to flash my passport with propiska--most of them were tired of their hard-drinking husbands so they were happy to get a fresh fuck from a stranger and asked nothing in return.

Time flied quick and I had to give up these simple pleasures and come back to Moscow to review new clubs for the exile readers.

After reading all of mostly useless emails I found the right one. My friend DJ Fonar, one of the fathers of Russian electronic scene, with his 22 years experience at turntables was celebrations his birthday at GOROD.

Gorod is one of the biggest Moscow clubs located in pre-revolutionary mansion with two big dance floors and endless rooms.

Many years ago when I was a pioneer at my school we went to see Lenin mau-soleum. The pleasure to see Lenin corpse took you through three hours of standing in line with hundreds of other visitors. I didn't realize that DJ Fonar was as popular. The size of the queue was similar to my childhood memories. There were all kinds of people standing and patiently waiting to get it.

The crowd inside the club was very mixed and didn't have one style. In this case in Russian you say it is a "demokraticniy klub" but it is far not the same as "democratic" in English. "Casual" could be a better word but still it didn't describe the situation.

After I came back from my great village holidays I realized that you don't have to travel far for good. Some nice things could wait for you just around the corner. These thoughts brought me to **SAKHAR**, a club in 5 minutes walk from my place, which I never visited.

Oh, what a fool I was! One of my friends told me it's a place where you can see a lot of teenage girls but of their advanced kind. He was thousand times right! I didn't see anyone older than thirty except okhranniki but at the same time I didn't have a feeling that I'm in a kindergarden.

A girl securing the purses left at the table while her other five friends were getting wild on the dance floor was the easiest catch I've ever had.

Alina was too young to know The exile but still she was happy to show me the club. Well, I might have spent too much time at my aunt's village so I missed how Beeline started putting their booths in the clubs. Original idea of this booth was to have a place for a quite conversation as it secures you from any sounds. In my world this booth was the best place to rip Alina's peach and get her number afterwards.

Club: Sakhar
Address: 23/25, Sretenka Str.
Phone: 607-28-38
M: Sukharevskaya
Hours: Thu - Fri, 12.00 - 06.00

bar-dak n [Russ, бардак, brothel, chaos] slang (1997)

BARS & CLUBS

Things That Do & Don't Suck

The eXile decoding KEY

= Fakhie Factor! will you do "it" tonight? ★ = no, even Abramovich couldn't score here ★★ = roll up in a Merc or wave yer passport around; otherwise, expect to do some talkin' ★★★ = pack pepper spray, cuz U need protection	= Feis Kontrol Factor! will U get past the thug manning the door? ★ = even fat embassy employees can get in ★★ = if you read FHM or Elle, you're fine ★★★ = if you can't have the art director killed, you're not gettin' in	= Foam Factor! Will cheap-0 eXile readers be able to afford the beer? ★ = Up to 150R per beer ★★ = 150-300R per beer ★★★ = 300-3000R per beer	= Starvin' Silovik! This isn't a rating factor, folks. It means that under the new regime, there is no room for this establishment. The place is closed, gone, kaput. Siyonara.	= Remont Factor! Russia is constantly improving and restructuring itself under Putin, and this place is currently striving to maintain a socially responsible and modern interior

1171



★★ ★ ★

Cheers:

Ginormous new bar-club in the up-and-coming Savvinskaya Nab. Row, opened up by Kostya of Dacha fame, and the publisher of this newspaper and Ne Spat'. Huge bar, with several sub-bars on the first floor and upper deck. Also live bands play on the upper deck, and you can hide out in the VIP there. Prices reasonable, music so far shows impressive range, from Peter Hook (ex-Joy Division/New Order) to DJ Ojo and others.

Jeers:

Feis kontrol wouldn't let in under-21 dyevs, leading us to wonder: since when is this the fucking US?! Taxi predators ream you here. Coat check too small to handle the large crowds--hopefully they have that worked out by now.

M: Sportivnaya

Address: Savvinskaya Nab. 21
Phone: 740-5583

Hours: As many as you can handle

Aktovy Zal



★★

★

Cheers:

Blow-Up has been closed down due to "hooliganism," which means Moscow's great undiscovered acts now have one less place to play. However, AZ is still in biznis, and we caught a recent Saturday night gig packed full of bearded types and intelligent-looking chicks. Moscow's premiere indie spot! Blow Up is starting to feature a Krizis-style indie DJ set every Friday night. It should be way MORE indie than Krizis, but... whatever. Like, we might go, if we feel like it. Aktovy Zal packs in non-stop local and international indie acts every week from Thursday to Sunday. There ain't no other place you're gonna anything closer to indie than here.

Jeers:

Way out in the boondocks by the thrid ring means you really have to plan to go here.

Cover: cheap, depends on the concert

M: Baumanskaya

Phone: 265-3935

Address: Perevedenovsky per., 18

Hours: 8 to late, depends on shows

Apelsin



★★

★

★

Cheers:

Concert hall has great sound, and gets some of the best shows in town, from indie faves like Mogwai all the way up to dinosaur rockers like Nazareth. Easily one of the best live venues in town. Has bowling and other things to keep you busy before or after a show. Concert hall has in's and out's so you can easily slip out to take in the courtyard of a neighboring gothic cathedral.

Jeers:

About a year ago it was pulling the best--by Moscow standards--bands and packing a crowd. Now it's so empty, the bartenders started bringing reading material to work. Sovok bartender alert! Bartender poured us a beer then refused to serve us because he didn't have change. Pack your 100R notes, cuz they can't break anything higher. Guards force everyone to leave 10 minutes after a show ends. Seems far from the solar system, even if it isn't. VIP seating insanely far from the stage, and one of the few places that has blocked views. Small entrance means you may be stuck in line to enter or exit.

Cover: depends on the concert

M: Barrikadnaya

Phone: 253-0253

Address: Ul. Malaya Gruzinskaya 15

Hours: 12:00 - 05:00

B1 Maximum



★★

★

★★

Cheers:

Still has no soul and can ruin many gigs with its vast cold vibe, but service is improving. You no longer have to stand 30 min. in line for an overpriced drink. Image of Gogo! Bordello frontman Eugent Hutz piggybacking on B1's asshole bouncers when they tried to stop the fun is STILL the image of the year. Multiple bars make it easy to get a drink if the club is relatively empty, which is a mixed blessing. The Chemical Brothers show was a rare perfect match for this place, with the best light/video show we've seen in a while.

Jeers:

Lindquist and Levine tried leaving about 1 minute into NoFX's set but the concert was so oversold it took about 30 minutes to get the fuck out. What's more the whole eXile team got kicked out of the VIP zone because they ran out of VIP bracelets. We haven't seen bathrooms this nasty since Leningradsky Volkzal. Has absolutely no atmosphere whatsoever.

Cover: depends on the concert

M: Leninsky Prospekt / Shabolovskaya

Phone: 648-6777

Address: Ul. Ordzhonikidze 11

Hours: 18:00 - 06:00

B2



★★

★

★

Cheers:

It took B1 Maximum to make B2 seem like a cool indie club. One of the only places to attract any sort of crowd on Sundays. Good place if U like 'em young and impressionable. Cheap, giant venue that kicks butt when it's full. Good live acts. Three different restaurants, including reasonably priced sushi, under one roof. Music doesn't impede conversation in the restaurants, but is loud enough to not have to make the effort to think of anything to say.

Jeers:

Easily some of the most sovok and least service-oriented staff in town. Prices may seem bizarre considering that this is supposed to be a dive rock club. Suffering from multiple-personality disorder. Empties out early even on weekends.

Cover: depends

M: Mayakovskaya

Phone: 209-9918

Address: Bolshaya Sadovaya ul. 8

Barfly



★★

★

Cheers:

Recent 4AM visit saw off-duty Help bartenders gettin' down, so U know they mix the drinks well here! After a long n ight of drinking and not getting drunk, the whiskey-colas really starte hitting us here! Drunken dyev factor on the rise, and you know if a girl's partying here she's ready fo' anything! Asking the barman to get creative can have serious consequences... Killer underground dive run by the same folks who brought you den of debauchery McCoys. From the looks of it, folks'll be drinking just as much here. Part of the million-cocktails-to-choose-from wave launched by Help. Little frames cover the walls with descriptions of the drinks available. Tasty and cheap menu that lets U decide what goes in your noodle dish.

Jeers:

eXile alert! Barfly is apparently so popular now that you have to book a table to get in. Yes, U heard us right: U have to book a table at a fucking dive bar. Service and noodles not at the level we remembered. Crowd can be Prague-like in that faux-boho sort of way. The best ad yet for NY's anti-smoking laws; an evening here is the equivalent of a three-pack a day habit for a year. Crowded, but little in the way of babes on recent week-end visit.

M: Chekhovskaya

Address: Strastnoi blvr. 6 str. 2

Phone: 209-2779

Hours: 24 hours

Booze Bub



★

★

★

Cheers:

Gets TOTALLY packed on weekends, making this an ideal pre-party venue for those hitting Tema next door. Pissed off that there's not a single Thurs. night go-to bar that actually has chicks? Then Bub's your answer. Recent Thursday night visit revealed a place packed with easy, desperate student and secretary dyevs. Recently opened by the Help/Tema crew, which is a already a good sign. Located next door to Tema, if you need a break from the Duck-esque atmosphere there. Spacious bar and good cocktails. Combines the intimacy of an Irish pub with the spaciousness of a German Bierhall. Their beer really does taste better.

Jeers:

Sovok vest-wearing grampa tried facing eXile editors Zaitchik and Yasha during a recent visit. We're used to getting feised by goons, but this was something different, and somehow more humiliating. Recent Saturday evening visit found BB totally empty, but we were told that in order to sit down we would need to make a reservation a week in advance. WTF? Needless to say, we went somewhere that actually wanted our money. A tad bit phallocentric on a recent visit. May need some time to get packed full of the reasons we like to visit Help and Tema.

M: Chisty Prudy

Address: Potapovsky Per. 5, bld. 2

Phone: 621-4717

Hours: Round the clock

Cafe Royal



★

★

Cheers:

Man, oh man! This was Katz's last review. Brings a tear to our eyes just thinking about it. What did she have to say about it? Well, it's a basement jazz/blues club with constant live acts. If you're into this kind of scene, then you'll probably like it. It's got a wide selection of food, rooms that you can rent out for parties. Royal's informal feel and the large schools of aging snappers it draws will make American women feel especially comfortable here...

Jeers:

...and we're not sure that's a good thing.

Cover: Depends on who's playing

M: Chisty Prudy

Phone: 607-0969, 607-9172

Address: Ashcheulov per., 9

Hours: 12PM to 6AM

Website: www.caferoyal.ru

Che



★★★

★

★★

Cheers:

eXile alert! eXile staff party introduced Zaitchik to his first batch of drunken dyevs dancing on bar, tables and eventually winding down in his lap. Thurs. night crowd packs a solid mix of young office types and aging secretary molls looking to get down. Food's pretty good as far as drinking fare goes, especially the tacos and some kind of S. American samosas.

Jeers:

Black Magic Woman and other Santana trash keep you praying for the techno DJ to come back on. A bunch of older bursetka-carrying semi-gopniks in spandex shirts manage to mix in with the office talent. Fish tacos were rotten. Ginormous bouncers try to keep everyone out, but apparently if you have a reservation it's no problem...

M: Lubyanka

Phone: 621-7477

Address: Nikolskaya Str. 10/2

Hours: 12pm-9am

Club XIII



★★

★★

★★★

Cheers:

You can go home again! Girls will sometimes hit on you just for being a foreigner! XIII's got a good thing goin', with raunchy cabaret shows, teetering ladies, and just enough face control to make you feel like you achieved something by getting in! Last Saturday XIII was on, catching a good niche somewhere between Fabrique and Leto, though closer to Fabrique (thank god). Selection of E'd out and liquored up chicks spotted here. Ames got coralled into a rather suggestive freakin' bout with a hot offduty bargirl from a certain Swedish nightclub. The club that set the standard and opened the era of elitny giant nightclubs is back after a several-year hiatus. Top notch DJs, friendly girls, not quite as grotesquely elitny as Leto, makes this a good alternative to Fabrique, esp if you're tired of the latter's crowds and petty thieves.

Jeers:

Recent Shalya-less party was duller than a Death Porn kitchen knife. Very very pricy drinks. We kind of miss, in retrospect, the dark opium dens, where anything could and did happen.

M: Chisty Prudy

Address: Myasnitskaya 13

Hours: Wed-Sun, 10pm - 6am

Denis Simachev Bar



★

★★★

★★

Cheers:

eXile alert! DS showed its humane side by waving wheelchair-bound eXile editor Yasha Levine through face control. At first we gave this place two stinky thumbs down, but now we've reconsidered. We now proclaim DS the best elitny dive in town! If you've seen the Sochi Olympics ads running on CNN, then you might recognize the Rice Rocket bike done up in a Russian folk design paint job that was featured in the ad and is now permanently chained to DS's entrance. Even Simachev is doing his part to make Russia's crack pipe Olympic dream a reality! One of Moscow's top designers opened this bar in his designer boutique.

Jeers:

Notice we changed the beer factor from one to two stars. DS has finally done what we've been expecting, they've doubled their prices. Managers to cram the most annoying elements of Moscow patos into the space of walk-in closet. It's become Moscow's hippest weekday elitny hangout and the newest roost for Opera/Dyagelev/Krishna molls on their off night. Attracts droves of rich Russian dudes doing the Planet of the Apes routine around their expensive cars and bikes outside.

M: Teatrnaya

Phone: 629-8085

Address: Stoleshnikov Per. 12

Hours: 12:00-06:00

Duma



★★★

★

Cheers:

There's a lot to like about this place, assuming you can find it: Fun young student crowd, no moving cars in sight, surrounded by quiet back streets, great music: heavy on 60s rare grooves, soul, and funk, nice patio, good food. In the summertime they put a ping-pong table outside. Neighborhood bar feel where everyone knows each other is weird to see, but feels good. No feis control. This might be the place where Krizis non-eyes retire. Tons of sweet dyevs that all seem to be studying architecture. People here actually dance with joy in their faces. Very little bullshit. Caesar salad pretty good, too.

Jeers:

Known to blast annoying artsy French music at insane decibel levels. The last time we went we had to climb a fence or two to get there. Sometimes the hippie element is a bit thick and the riggers seem to be taking a liking to this place. And that just don't bode well...

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more info at www.papas.ru

RUSSIAN SPEED RACER

By Eric Lindquist

So I'm in Moscow for the first time visiting my big brother Jared. I hear he's a somewhat of authority here on gigs and stuff. I mean, it's weird. I'm getting all this red carpet treatment just because I'm Jared's younger brother. And come to think of it, all these years I thought he was boasting.

So like I fly in to Moscow, I'm in the city for less than two hours when Jared's like, "Dude, we're going to this new weird but cool club that opened up called **MOTORHOME**, my friend's having a birthday party there."

I was like, "Okay, whatever." I am tired as hell, been drinking for like 16 hours straight and wouldn't care if he took

Drinking and racing, all night long.

The birthday boy had rented out the club for a private party. Aside from racing tournaments and weekend parties with DJs, this type of thing happens all the time. I'm told its way more chilled out during the day though -- chill enough to bring your kids to, if you were so inclined. And, at just over \$10 per hour, it might not be such a bad way to spend time with the little ones.

They were also showing a football game on the TV mounted along the club's island bar. I forgot who was playing cuz I blacked out at some point. But for the point is that **MOTORHOME**, be respectin' sports yo! I'm not just talking about this thing that passes as "football." They show the real shit too: football, baseball, basketball and even rugby. All you gotta do is ask the bartender to change the channel on like on of the million flat-screen TVs they got hanging around or on a big projection screen they got hanging in one corner.

I was taking this creative writing class for incoming freshmen, and we learned about narrative arcs and stuff. Luckily, even though I blacked out, I still managed to finish off the night with a happy Hollywood ending. I was playing a game eight ball with a some British guy, when I stared getting friendly with a Russian girl playing Russian billiards all by herself (**MOTORHOME** has a huge space with both Russian billiards and standard American pool tables, eight in all). She reads *The Exile* (at least she told me that), so I'm not gonna fuck anything up by writing anything indecent about her. I still do have a week left here. All I can say is that I'm definitely gonna take my semester abroad here in Russia. I love Russia! I love you Natasha!

Two more bits of information before I head out the door (after all, I gotta work off the tittie bar tab the *eXile* was nice enough to provide me with). First, their ladies chill out room is in the process of being converted to a Persian-style hookah/kalyan chill out room sometime in the next week or so.

CLUB REVIEW

me to see some of that faggy ballet crap Russians love so much, as long as they served beer there.

But man, I had no idea we were going to a auto racing-themed club. The second I got in, my jaw just like dropped. From what Jared's been writing home, I thought Russia was in the technological Stone Age or something. But this place was decked out like some sort of futuristic, rated R version of Chuck E. Cheese with a huge bar and rows of racing simulation pods lining the walls.

Instead of gay furry mascots, the place was packed full of Russian go-go dancers in sexy racing outfits doing lezbo shows on the freakin' bar. I mean, damn!

Moscow is THE place to be -- especially if you're under 21 like me. It's got the drop on Tiquana like no Mexican's business. Mexico couldn't dream of getting such fat ass racing simulation arcades.

I mean, these weren't some two-bit bar racing game like *Cruisin' USA*. **MOTORDHOME** has the Real Deal Holyfield set up. It's was designed by Formula 1 racers and what the pro drivers have set up in their home. You know, for extra-curricular activities like learning a track or two. The simulators can all be hooked up together so you can race anyone and everyone in the club -- and that's exactly what we did.

MOTORHOME

Metro: Novoslobodskaya
Address: Novoslobodskaya 20
Phone: 789-88-54
 Check their website for news and events:
www.motordom.ru
Cost: 330 RPH (rubles per hour) during the day (until 19:00 on weekdays, 16:00 Fri-Sun.), 660 RPH in the evenings, 330 RPH from midnight to 1 a.m. every day.



Cover: None
M: Okhotnyi Ryad
Phone: 692-1119
Address: 12:00 - 6:00

Fabrique



★★★★ ★★ ★★

Cheers:

Still the most babe-a-licious club in town, at least where you aren't expected to pay for special favors. Shocking incident confirmed Fabrique as an *eXile* favorite. A guy OD'd on drugs and was dragged out to the front of the club. Amazingly, while paramedics unsuccessfully tried to resuscitate the OD victim (not applying CPR), a group of hot rich chicks pulled up in the Merc and, deciding that they weren't gonna let a death and drug raid ruin their evening, stopped the car, opened the doors, and blasted techno while they danced and laughed. Think Propaganda circa '00, only with more space to move around. U might not get laid that night, but one date should do it. High student/expat factor, low pafus!

Jeers:

eXile alert! Eventhough Levine rode up to the club in a black Merc, he got feised because of his disability. Recent signs point to the fact that Fabrique is going down hill. Bored babe factor is on the rise. People standing around as if waiting for something to happen. We've given these guys way too many props to get feised here, especially when we're not fall-down drunk. Beware of thieves!

M: Novokuznetskaya
Phone: 953-6576/540-9955
Address: Kosmodamianskaya Nab. 2
Hours: 18:00 - 06:00

Help



★★ ★ ★

Cheers:

eXile alert! Ignore previous comments about weekends being hit or miss: every Friday and Saturday (and an increasing number of weeknights) is packed full of drunk sluts dancing on the floor, on the tables, and on the bar. While the rest of Moscow's bars and clubs are turning gay, thank God there's one place still keeping it real for the homophobes. Non-dyke lezbo activity has been steadily on the rise. One time, upon sitting down, a girl from a neighboring table came over and said: "I'm sorry, I lost a bet" and then proceeded to get up on her table and do a striptease! Later we saw two babes practically fucking on the dancefloor, and the night ended with a flat-chested chick flashing us repeatedly. Great place to start or end a bender. The director is a serious cocktail aficionado (and award-winning barman) who has come up with a variety of unusual and at times frightening cocktails, all reasonably priced. Casual woody interior, relaxed crowd, decent service. Long Island iced tea for 150r. Try the "red hot slammer." Bartenders often seen at tables whipping up fresh concoctions, slamming glasses on tables, and lighting things on fire.

Jeers:

During our last visits, the place was half-alive. But then, it was 6pm... But that shouldn't be an excuse. Unmixed White Russians almost caused an unplanned puking session. Nachos were weak. 200 cocktails might overwhelm the indecisive types. We spotted a table of mungy Lonely Planet type expats.

M: Belorusskaya
Phone: 995-9535
Address: 1st Tverskaya-Yamskaya 27, bldg 1
Hours: always

Ikra



★★ ★ ★

Cheers:

Finally an indie/hipster bar hits town that's more or less tasteful to boot. Gets everyone from today's new kids on the block to ageing giants still worth checking in on—bottom line: tons o' interesting acts, every month, without fail. And there's no better place to watch/heckle a small gig than in Ikra's small hall, more intimate than NYC's Knitting Factory but gets the same caliber or bigger gigs. Food surprisingly edible.

Jeers:

Finally gave us club cards, but make us wait at the bar for a manager every time we try to use it. WTF!? Added hookah menu just to fuck wid us. Gets unbearably hot and stuffy inside when there's a packed gig like the recent Kid Koala show. Surly bartenders sometimes can't be bothered to pour you a beer.

Cover: Up to 600R depending on the event
M: Kurskaya
Phone: 505-5351
Address: Ul. Kazakova 8A

Justo Banya Douche



★★ ★★★ ★★★

Cheers:

Located on the grounds of an old banya, JBD is the latest addition to the Moscow's indie-eitny club scene. Harder to get into and more expensive than Solyanka, it still manages to retain a "casual is cool" attitude, even if people's threads cost more than we make in a month. To prove that Russian elitny is turning indie, Babooshka picked up a chick with nothing more than a 300 ruble drink and a MacBook. But for all it's indie charm, it doesn't mean you'll get through face control unless your driver dropped you off on your E500 Merc.

Jeers:

Who's going to jeer hot elitny Russian Chicks in vintage-looking jeans and tight ironic tee's?

Cover: None
M: Lubyanka
Phone: 625-6836
Address: Teatrainy proezd 3
Hours: daily from 6pm, concerts on weekends at 9 pm.

KARMA BAR



★★ ★ ★★

Cheers:

eXile alert! Katz nearly had to beat the dirty sluts piling up onto her man with a stick. And she would have too, if the dude wasn't such a pussied out wanker and fell back from the action himself. The place is so jam-packed with salivating sluts hungry for male action, you'd think you were in a bad porno horror rip off. All they got to do is get a whiff of your pheromones and damn do these girls move! The only way to sate them is buy them round after round of cheap-o booze. Oh yeah and there's serious Latin Dance stuff going on.

Cheers/Jeers:

The cover charge. Damn, what's up with dat. What time iz we livin' in? To get to the overflow gardiob, you have to walk about two kilometers through a dark and winding underground tunnel. You might never find your way back!

Cover: 200R for chicks, 300R for dudes on weekends (liberal face control)
M: Kuznetsky Most
Phone: 624-5633
Address: Ul. Pushechnaya 3 (just down from Hola Mexico)
Hours: Thurs.-Sun.: 21:00 - 6:00

Krizis Zhanra



★★ ★★ ★

Cheers:

eXile editors no longer embarrassingly halted at the door by Krizis' notoriously Nazi face control. Nash seems to have finally solved the problem. This place continuously packs in babe-o-licious dyves almost any day of the week and they love rock'n'roll! No joke, folks: we had to see it ourselves to believe. Some *eXile* insiders claim it's the best place in town to meet a wife. THE place to meet a girl you can spoon with... plenty of approachable babes, but they require a little wooing. Very impressive crowd, including lots of single hipsters and one chick in a Kajagoogoo outfit. They've done a surprisingly good job recreating the atmosphere of the ol' KZ, creating a pafus-free zone for all you bo-hos, without the dirt and grime of Lyotchik. Combines student-y types with intellegensia, upwardly mobile yuppies and a smattering of expats. Less pressure to get wasted than at Bourbon St.

Jeers:

If you're not as well-connected as an *eXile* editor, you will still experience face control at a Nazi Level from Thurs. to Sun. Techno music gets progressively loud as the weekdays approach Friday. Because it's a non-pafusny kinda place, there're plenty of cows mixed in with the talent. Reminds us of our Golden Days of love and youth and springtime, which then reminds us of the fact that we're old. Long Islands, although cheap, rank somewhere between "bizarre" and "non-alcoholic fruity ass" on the scale of things. Can be a bit boring if no

concert is happening.

Queers: Every Thursday
M: Chistyie Prudy / Kitai Gorod
Phone: 623-2594, 778-2234
Address: Pokrovka 16/16, str. 1
Hours: 24/7

Krisha



★★★ ★★★ ★★★

Cheers:

After a good run this winter, the *eXile*'s luck may be up here. Or maybe we just look especially Chechen with our summer tans and long beards. And furry hats. In any case, we've been faced on repeat by the Obergruppenfuhrer at the door since July. We're hoping that'll change with the coming of fall and the return of our pale faces. If you can get in, then note that the place is packed with amazing wildlife—the whole range of fauna is here. Main dance floor on the rooftop, partly covered, is where the action is, but the downstairs darker dancefloor may be where you'll get luckier. The chill-out space is one of the plushiest in town.

Jeers:

See above.
M: You don't
Address: Naberezhnaya near Hotel Ukraina
Hours: 19:00 - late

MOTORHOME



★ ★

Cheers/Jeers:

See review above
M: Novoslobodskaya
Address: Novoslobodskaya 20
Hours: till 1 a.m.
Phone: 789-8854

MOST



★ ★★★ ★★★

Cheers:

Fancy-assed new oligarch lair, reportedly funded by 90s-oligarch Mamut, once known as the banker to the Yeltsin family. And it shows. No stops are pulled from the multi-zillion-dollar display of cars out front, to the heinously overpriced food upstairs, to the way-outta-your-league 'garch-hunting babeage downstairs, where the music and dancing are.

Jeers:

Jeering Most is like jeering the oligarchs themselves.
M: Okhotnyi Ryad
Phone: 660-0705
Address: 6/3 Kuznetskiy Most
Hours: Club open Fri to Sat 8pm to 6am. Restaurant open from 8am till last guest on weekdays, 24 hours on weekends.

Papa's Place



★★ ★ ★★

Cheers:

eXile alert! An annoying American chick and her German boyfriend accused Rudnitsky and Yasha of giving Americans living abroad a bad name but backed down after Adderalled-out Yasha called the Nazi out for a fist fight. That's right, who da man? Still redefining the meaning of "passed with drunken sluts." Someone forgot to tell them that it's not the 90s anymore. No-holds-barred wet T contest shows more skin than most strip clubs! Proof that there's still a place in Moscow where the dyves are plenty and not afraid to drink. We haven't had this much fun since Putin came to power! Papa's four-day ninth birthday bash took so much out of us, our livers are on vacation til next year. Absolutely frigin' packed full of sluts and drunk *eXholes*, with every-one drinking. This is it folks, no unsurmountable face control, no *eXtreme* prices, tons of approachable offerings and now they even have America's finest brew available: Bud. Thursday "Office Night" rawqs: free food offerings, like the awesome pizza, and an advantageous chick-to-unit ratio. We also saw one of the drunkest Neanderthals of our lives here, devouring his pizza while his dyev girlfriend slapped him and pulled his ear to leave. Latin dancing nights are the ONLY game in town on Tuesday! Our last visit saw a mix of sluts and balding guys, and if they can score surely U can too!

Jeers:

U may need to beg for an invite to office party night, due to its popularity. Was cold downstairs last time we were there. Latin night downside: U may have to dance to have a chance. There's such a thing as too packed with sluts... like when you have to wait 30 min just to pay the cover. Wouldn't let Rudnitsky in on Halloween in his *sportivny costum*, as the okhronik really believed he was a Caucasian bandit.

Cover: 150R on weekends, free-ish during the week
M: Chistyie Prudy
Phone: 755-9554
Address: Myasnikskaya Ul. 22 (inside Johnny's)
Hours: Always

Propaganda



★★★ ★★ ★

Cheers:

eXile crazy dyve alert! One *eXile* editor snagged a chick here that demanded he hit her in the face, and she loved every cheekbone-crushing smack. Meanwhile, another member of the *eXile* editorial team pulled a barely sane art *studentika* that dragged him on a Moscow stripclub and whore-banya tour. Other clubs come and go, but Propaganda's somehow managed to stay packed all these years with the right mix of grunge, glamour and, most importantly, student dyves that haven't yet learned they should hate you if your watch ain't expensive enough. And yes, this is the only place in a city of 12 million that is packed on Thursdays. The best place in town to get gals' digits, even if they won't go home

with you immediately. The food rawks, and the prices are right. Maybe we'z getting old, but we find ourselves here oogling the biz-lunch crowd much more often than the disco crowd.

Jeers:

When the fuck did Propaganda become elitny?! Recent Friday night visit ended at the door when we were told the club was having a private party. After accusing the promoter of lying to us, we were told: "Whether I am lying to you or not, it is still a private party." Be ready to enter tight ribbed-sweater territory, where the line between metrosexual and flamin' fag is awfully thin. Going after you've had a few too many sets the stage for some eXtremely painful rejections. Girls here drank more in the Yeltsin era.

Queers: Sunday nights are 'gay' nights

M: Kitai Gorod

Phone: 624-5732

Address: Bolshoi Zlatoustinsky per. 7

Hours: Sun-Thurs 12:00-06:00, Fri-Sat 'til 08:00

Prosto Bar



★★★ ★ ★★

Cheers:

Is the grimy industrial zone around Belorussky vokzal slowly turning into the new, less arty, more elitny Vinzavod. Or is this club just an indie version of Papa John's? We're not sure, but they sure do pack a lot of hot young dyevs ready to boogie all the way to your pad. Cheap booze, cheap and decent food.

Jeers:

Euro pop.

M: Belorusskaya

Phone: 257-0717

Address: 17, 1-ya Yamskogo Polya Ul.

Hours: 11:00 - till last guest

The Real McCoy



★★★★ ★ ★

Cheers:

eXile alert! McCoy's has entered the 22nd century by installing the eXile's toilet-stall newspaper stands! Folks, now you can read the eXile while vomiting out your Long Island Iced Tea...all 8 of 'em! Buns McGillicuddy recently spotted doing shots with mullet-master Dima Bilan! Pay your respects...and pay the price for all that fun 'n shame 'n shitfaced inebriation. We'd been staying away out of concern for our livers, but one Friday night was enough to realize why livers are overrated! This place has so many hot and drunk sluts that you don't have time to focus on one before the next demands your attention. Newbies in Moscow have been known to go into catatonia when they enter this place. We admit: Thursday nights are hit or miss, although recent visits have leaned much more to the "hit" side of the equation. Perhaps the best place to be reintroduced to Moscow night life after spending the long New Year's holidays in the de-sexed Western world. THE most dangerous place to go for weeknight nightcaps! We defy you to leave after just one drink. Hell, we defy you to leave after two! More 10PM last calls have turned into 3AM "oh fucks" than we can count! McCoy's is the closest thing to a guarantee this side of Night Flight. Always some table of desperate sluts here, even when it's otherwise empty. Often features the kind of drunken madness that was banned by the Geneva Convention. They let you pass out at the tables! Chances are if you wake up in Yugo-Zapadnaya with a bunch of Mexicans in a hail storm, you were at McCoy's the night before. If there's a way to get kicked out, we haven't found it! Packed 'til late.

Jeers:

Are they trying to push a blow habit on us by feising us for drunkenness at 4am? Don't go here sober—the human fauna might be startling. Some sluts so ugly, even the jumbo Long Island won't make you want them. Getting a drink on a weekend night requires a half-hour of screaming and waving money at the bartender. Occasionally packed with people we would really rather never run into again. Don't even think about heading onto the dance floor with an open drink in hand.

M: Barrikadnaya

Phone: 255-41-44

Address: Kudrinskaya pl. 1 (in the towering Stalin dom)

Hours: Always

Road House



★★ ★ ★

Cheers:

You wouldn't know it, but there's a genuine neighborhood blues joint in Moscow that sort of reminds us of the kinds of blues bars you'd find in mid-sized cities in America like Fresno or Dayton. And we mean that in a good way. Live blues every night, cozy atmosphere, absolutely no pafos or feis kontrol, cheap drinks and food. 30% discount for journalists, doctors and musicians! Lots of bliny, decent amount of groups of single chicks in tight jeans and 80s hairdos, tasty "Pork Barbados" for only 190r. Check out their music program and give it a shot, esp if you live in the area.

Jeers:

The whole "real people" suburban blues thing is not for everyone. While we saw a great Norwegian act playing (and the crowd loved it), we would expect some acts to sing "blues" with heavy Russian accents. Gets crowded so it can be hard to get a table.

Cover: only during shows, depends on act

M: Sportivnaya

Phone: 245-4183

Address: Ul. Dovatora 8 (close to metro)

Hours: noon-midnight

Sakhar



★★ ★★ ★★

Cheers/Jeers:

See club review on page 15

M: Sukharevskaya

Phone: 607-2838

Address: 235/25 Sretenka St.

Hours: Thu - Fri: 12:00 - 09:00

Silver's



★ ★ ★★

Cheers:

eXile alert! Yasha nearly got whacked by a dude who looked like a cartoon version of an Italian mafioso from Miami for snickering at him and his aging Russian troll. You'll hear more of the Queen's English here than at Oxford... Packed on weekends that you might have to listen in from the doorstep. Steve has created the favorite hangout for British castaways in town, with a lively pub feel to it any day of the week. We also hear they're gonna have the occasional curry night, featuring Steve's famous five-alarm curry. Rumored to give beluga caviar away as bar snacks. Biz lunch so filling, you'll have trouble finding room for a pint of Guinness! Easily the biggest one in the center, with a different hardy soup every day! It changes daily, and 2 of the 3 courses are always frickin' great (be warned, sometimes they try to slip a Russian salad in). Their newest corned beef sandwich (140R) packs in beautifully with a few pints of nitrogenated Kilkenny. The fish & chips are tasty and most under the rule of real-live Irishman Steve, so you're guaranteed real-life Western service with no excuses. Extra note: Food is oddly delish, esp the 150r biz lunch. We were served a heaping of beef stew and mashed potatoes. Serve cheap, cholesterol-heavy breakfasts as well. Always serviced with a smile by a rotating crew of cute barmaids.

Jeers:

You might get accosted by Russian students looking to practice their angliiski yazyk. Word's gotten out, and it's tough to find a seat for lunch. Don't come here to hunt for chicks—there ain't any. This is a place where English-speaking expats with beer-bulges come to gripe, banter, and watch free SkyTV. Irish aren't known for their good burgers, and neither is Silver's. Small setting means it can get packed evenings.

M: Okhotny Ryad

Phone: 290-4222

Address: 5/6 Tverskaya Ulitsa (go down Nikitskaya Per.)

Hours: 8 till late

Sixteen Tons



★★ ★ ★★

Cheers:

eXile alert! The eXile's 10th anniversary party took place here, and folks, we are damn glad we did it. No place could have handled the crowd rush, and the mad drunken mob of eXholes, half as well as Sixteen Tons did, with its superb bar staff, excellent sound system, great stage, and eXhole-friendly management. Thanks to Pasha, Andrei & crew for pulling it off. Shockingly high babe factor at the disco following gigs. Not that we got laid or anything...or even that we would want to. Upstairs has some of the top shows and a good mix of dyevs and serious music aficionadoes. Downstairs, a range of scalliwags ranging from oligarchs to eXpats to divorced mammas to starving journalists. Management not averse to fights outside.

Jeers:

Club named after the average weight of the dyevs. Not much to do upstairs when there isn't live music.

Cover: Devs: R100 weekdays, R150 weekends;

Guys: R150 weekdays, R200 weekends

M: Ul. 1905

Phone: 253-5300

Address: Presnenskiy Val 6

Hours: 18:00 - 6:00

Solyanka



★★★★ ★★ ★★

Cheers

eXile alert! Ever since Mix went the way of the Dodo, Solyanka's hipster crowd has been getting infused with late 20s/early 30s secretary/office worker type dyevs. And that's just fine by us. If you now the type, then you know that they are willing to take it anytime, anywhere. All you have to do is notice them. Case in point: Last weekend Levine and Rudnitsky had to beat off three 30-year-old chicks that wouldn't leave them alone until they surrendered their phone numbers. And all this because L & R were speaking English! Mental note: must start coming here more often. A shining example of the latest club trend: The indie pafosny hybrid. If you're tired of the same ol' Krizis, but can't stand the Fag Nation Propka scene, then Solyanka is the answer to your prayers. Semi-intelligent dance music, fairly priced drinks and a bunch of barely legal linged-out indie chicks that can't afford them.

Jeers:

Thursday nights can get a bit meaty. Going back to the 90s practice of charging for entrance. Most chicks have a "I'm one year away from becoming a Rai groupie" feel to them. So snatch 'em up before they hit seventeen and become way out of your league.

M: Kitay Gorod

Phone: None

Cover: 300 rubles, or something

Address: Solyanka 11/6

Sorry Babushka



★★ ★ ★★

Cheers:

eXile alert! Just confirmed. Sorry Bab's 3am Fri/Sat night drunk dyev index is way off the charts. This place is set to become one of our favorites, especially now that they gave us a 50% discount card! From the looks of things, they've also given tons of hot girls the cards, turning Sorry B into a pre-party magnet for gals looking to quench their thirst at the right price. Packs a good crowd on weekends and offers plenty of macking ops. Girls friendlier than most, and by that we don't mean they're ugly.

Jeers:

Recent menu update for 2007 has upset the balance of one of the best Caesar salads in town. Seems like everyone here only converses with each other via ICQ message sent between laptops. Weird hippie/Buddhist contingent mixed in with model level babes threw us off a bit. Portions getting smaller. 50% discount card might be more of a curse—we're getting a little sick of this place. Got a Prada-lite vibe. Not quite sure what the name means, and we're not sure they know either. You could easily break an ankle on the unexpected step near the bar. The food, a bargain for card-holders, probably ain't worth your rubles if you aren't as kawl as us.

M: Kitai Gorod

Phone: 784-0615

Address: Slavyanskaya pl. 2

Tema Bar



★★ ★ ★

Cheers:

eXile alert! Folks, Tema Bar's two-year anniversary was a sight to behold, reaffirming, once again, that on weekends this place transforms into what the Boar House used to be... but more wholesome. And to prove it, one of The eXile's editorial team picked up a chick that night just by standing at the bar and nodding yes. Previously, Yasha demonstrated by getting the digits of a nice Jewish girl, while at the same time successfully wooing a blond shiksa to bed with him... Recent anniversary par-tay was a who's-who of the anti-pafos, pro-alcohol'n'fun tusovka...along with fun-luv'n' babes, many of whom took it upon themselves to dance on the ginormous bar. Congrats, guys! If you love Help but wish it had more of a party scene, Tema is THE place to check out! One of a very, very few places in town where everyone's having a good time. Dyevs become unbelievably approachable around 1am after having downed a half-dozen tropical cocktails. Multiple sets of gals doing the fake lezbo thing to turn you on. One of the cocktails requires donning a Soviet Army helmet and getting whacked over the head with a ski! Dima of Help fame has opened another, bigger cocktail bar, this time smack dab in the center of Moscow! Great central drinking option, especially if you're sick of OGI. Mammoth cocktail menu impresses chicks. Nice value and prices.

Jeers:

Some of the surliest bartenders in town. One actually refused to light our flaming cocktails on fire. While all the girls are having fun and definitely available, you'll need to knock back a few before your beer goggles start functioning properly. Might run into old flings from McCoy's at inopportune moments. Food not exactly all that.

M: Chisty Prudy

Address: Potapovsky per. 5

Hours: 24

Voodoo Lounge



★★ ★ ★★

Cheers:

Whoa, are we sorry Voodoo fell off our radar screens: here's the antidote to Pafosny Moscow: cheap drinks, tons of approachable student babes, and action that's rawkin' before midnight! Don't let the cover turn you off: unlike just about every other club in Moscow, Voodoo packs a crowd early. Summer patio should be opening soon, increasing the snapper factor significantly. Recent birthday party visit revealed HUGE Lolita factor and low White God factor, meaning U could get lucky! Lots o' ladies, very few snobs; high marks on accessibility, but U gotta dance. Ames tried out a Latin dancing lesson here and almost got beat up by a chick. Plenty of young sluts lookin' for luv. Stays packed all night long. Voodoo has become part of the must-do "circuit" for everyone from hormone-charged eXholes to Latino-luv'n' teenies.

Jeers:

Things slow down early... around 3. These girls need a lot of space to dance—if you get too close, you might get hurt. If you don't respond well to Slavic pheromones, then beware the BO factor. Snideman impersonators rumored to get in without paying cover. Girls think that all you want is their number. Too many men with greasy ponytails and Hamas sympathizers.

Cover: 50R for broads, 150R for dudes (weekends only)

M: Belorusskaya

Phone: 253-2323

Address: Sredny Tishinsky pereulok 5/7

Hours: 18:00 - 6:00

Yello



★★ ★★ ★★

Cheers:

Continuing the trend in "intelligent" elitny/indie/pafosny clubs, Yello opens in exactly the same spot where the boho/bearded intelligentsia/rocker "Klub na Bretskoy"

used to be, signalling that in 2008, the beard is being replaced by the bilan. Good Pina Coladas.

Jeers:

Club opens up officially in February, so you gots to be club-connected to get in now. Has that "fresh, just-remonted" concrete smell.

Address: 6, 2nd Brestskaya Str. (entrance from 1st Brestskaya)

Phone: 694-09-36

M: Mayakovskaya

Hours: Officially to be opened in February though they have parties almost every weekend. Available for banquet.

Zhest



★★ ★ ★

Cheers:

eXile alert! We'd forgotten how cheap Zhest was until a gig last Friday when we were able to buy a round of drinks for four for under 1,000 rubles. Do you see how we upgraded Zhest's fahkie-faktor from 1 to 2 stars? That's because of a research mission the eXile editors embarked on recently, revealing that if you stand around the bar talking English, drunken indie chicks will hit on you. Even though (or especially if) their boyfriends are right behind them. Some of the chicks were even hot. Ames had a blast playing sugar daddy, as only a poverty-stricken old man can, buying cheap mugs of beer for little nose-ringed dyevs. This OGI-affiliate has a much more basement indie feel than the other OGIs, which are crawling with bearded pseudo-philosophers. Cheap-O, meaning it should fill up with foreign student types, English teachers and MT employees.

Jeers:

They closed the bar inside the concert hall, which means you have leave in order to get a drink. Come to think of it, in some cases that could be a cheer...Bouncers response to a fight is to deny entry to everyone across the board for days. Guess they'd rather be safe than make money. Weak bar in the concert area. No air conditioning and other environmentally friendly facilities.

M: Lubyanka

Phone: 628-4883

Address: Bolshaya Lubyanka 13/16 str. 1

Hours: 24/7

Zoloto



★★★ ★

Cheers:

This place may be opening the newest hip industrial tusovka neighborhood near the Belorussky train station. eXile club reviewer Babooshka went therem, he says he picked up like three young chicks while in mourning for a childhood friend that got run over. But he's usually full of shit.

Jeers:

None that Babooshka told about.

Address: 35, 1st Lysinovskiy per.

Phone: 237 6652

M: Dobryninskaya

Hours: 24/7

EROTIC

911 Club



★★★★ ★★ ★★

Cheers:

eXile alert! The OG 911 in the hotel is still open! Which means U don't have far to go if you make friends. Imagine Shandra but in a small, cozy setting the size of some minigarch's living room. Lots of girls all eager to pay attention to you. Strip stage right in front of your face, couches, and rooms upstairs (one has karaoke) where you can take your favorite dancer. Drinks aren't overpriced, and the kabinety are free on Sundays, which is good news for cheap-O expats. Also entrance is for now at least free.

Jeers:

While not expensive, if you're an English teacher or an editor of the eXile, then this place is out of your range.

M: Leninsky Prospekt

Phone: 507-2727

Address: 15 Kosyguina (in the Korston hotel)

Hours: 21:00 - 06:00

Bordo



★★★★ ★★ ★★

Cheers:

Holy shit! Bordo done went and added a sauna, so you can get so fresh and so clean while you're gettin' dirty! Might contain the highest concentration of perfumed flesh per square inch on this planet! Deviates from the single-mindedness of Safari and Ishtar... meaning that the owners didn't skimp on details like air conditioning. That's right folks, you can actually come and enjoy yourself here before you go about your business. Oh, and did we mention, the ladiez are slamm'n! It's comfortable, well-ventilated and all-together less seedy than just about any other full-service establishment in town. Karaoke in VIP rooms means that you can tell the girl you take that you own a talent agency and think she's got potential.

Jeers:

The veneer of civilization is something that our Editorial Board has consistently come out against in the past. Could this place be haunted by the ghost of the Expat Club?

M: Kitai Gorod

Phone: 917-4545

Address: Pivchesky per. 4 str. 1

Hours: All of them!

Divas



★★ ★ ★★

Cheers:

eXile alert! A former Hungry Duck beau-from-Ames'-past is now a dancer here! Who says dating Ames doesn't pay?! Conveniently-located ad in this very paper for info on parties and discounts.

Jeers:

Like all strip clubs, you wind up spending a lot more money than if you had stayed home to search for porn on the net.

Cover: 700R

M: Pushkinskaya

EATS

KEY \$ = UP TO \$15.00 \$\$\$ = \$30.00 – \$50.00
 \$\$ = \$15.00 – \$30.00 \$\$\$\$ = \$50.00 – ∞
(for one salad, entree, and one cocktail per person)

African

Adis Ababa

\$
Cheers:
 The only Ethiopian restaurant in Moscow is also its best. Authentic oils and spices mean legit 'Thopian goodness in every dish. The Ghoulash Adis Ababa just about had us planning a vacation to the Horn. Every dish is spicy and filling; including decent vegetarian selection. Hoegaarten on tap. Friendly staff will occasionally play Ethiopian funk.

Jeers:
 We're not sure what it is about Ethiopian food, but for some reason you just don't really get the urge to go very often.
M: Kurskaya
Phone: 916-2432

Address: Zemlyanoi Val, Dom 6

American

Correa's

\$
Cheers:
 eXile alert! New Correa's branch opened up near Mayakovskaya. Recent tasting affirmed a thumbs-up on the brunchfast goods. Also, the babeage factor seems to get higher and pain-ier every weekend. They've added a couple of new slammin'-good omelets to their repertoire, including a great spinach and mozzarella baby that we thoroughly enjoyed. Great lunch option if you're not too hungry... all three sandwiches our table ate had us in nirvana! 5+ for the smoked turkey and goat cheese 'wich. A most awesomely delicious Buffalo Mozzarella salad (290r). Every item is a delight; in fact it might be the best breakfast offering outside of the US, if you're into the American breakfast thing (and only a barbarian wouldn't be). We tried the goat cheese and black bean omelet, and yes, it's Moscow's best. As for the dinner meals... First, the marinated olives 'n artichoke hearts. Second, the juicy Roasted beet salad with pesto, aged goat cheese and pine nuts. We didn't know beets could be so good! Third, the Terriyaki Chicken Pita with avocado and cilantro—best damn sandwich in Moscow. Fourth, the entrees. The grilled salmon with orange-soy glaze and fresh snow peas is an amazing, juicy, fresh cut that will leave you very pleased, while Strip Steak with berry-glaze and thick cut guacomole salad will satisfy your meat jones. Deli items a hit with oil-windfall Russians.

Jeers:
 For some reason babes with babies make this their favorite weekend brunchfast spot. If like us your idea of a good breakfast does not include looking at some way-too-thin-and-hot chick trying to show off her baby (the new accessory of the Russian elitny class), then like us, you'll be slightly annoyed. When we tried to order an Erdinger beer from the menu, waitress told us "we haven't had that for quite some time." Ordynka location hidden in a business park, of all places. May make you feel a little too delovoy as you search for the entrance. Seating area too small. Place has become so popular that you need to reserve hours in advance.
M: 1: Belorusskya; 2: Tretyakoskaya, 3: n/a, 4: Paveletskaya 5: Mayakovskaya
Phone: 1: 933-6157 2: 725-5878, 3: 729-2585, 4: 969-2113, 5: 789-9654
Address: 1: Bolshaya Gruzinskaya 32; 2: Bolshaya Ordynkaya 40/2 (through the shlangbaum), 3: Rublevo-Uspenskoe Shosse 85/1, 4: Ul. Sadovnicheskaya 82 bld. 1 5: Ul. Gasheka 7/1
Hours: 8.00 - 22.00 weekdays, 9.00 - 22.00 weekends

Flat Iron Grill

Wi-Fi
\$\$
Cheers:
 This place is located in the Marriott Courtyard hotel. If you're already staying there and absolutely cannot leave the premises, then there's no reason not to eat here. After all, it's right in the lobby and the hamburger is pretty good, and if you like fried chicken, then the Caesar salad ain't bad either.

Jeers:
 The WiFi isn't free.
M: Okhotny Ryad
Phone: 981-3300
Address: Voznesensky Pereulok 7
Hours: All of them

Hard Rock Cafe

Wi-Fi
\$\$
Cheers:
 Legendary burger (600r) perhaps the greatest burger this town has ever seen. Giant Angus patty, with bacon, cheese, and onion rings. Mmmmm, we you can taste your arteries clot! Hot damn, folks, that thar's a hell of a breakfast special! For an amazing 100R you get three eggs any style, bacon, sausage and toast, and potatoes! Move over, Starlite! We nit you shot, folks! Also the

breakfast burrito (180R) got high marks from Dr. Dolan. We had their burger and we rank it tied with Starlite for Moscow's best, save Scandinavia's gourmet burger. Huge portions, great setting that will impress your outside-the-Third-Ring date. Nachos massive and satisfying, good club sand. Non-stop music vids mean that you won't have embarrassing silent moments with your date.

Jeers:
 New menu seems to have jacked up the prices, while leaving the portions the same. All-VH1 all the time video system makes us pine for the days of Creed. They get you with the 60R "American coffee" that's espresso 'n' water. There's always something... A lot of stuff, like the bacon, too salty. A lot of songs, like Creed, too shity. Heavy American tourist presence. Place so packed now you'll probably have to wait.

M: Smolenskaya
Phone: 244-8970
Address: Stary Arbat 44

Hours: 24/7

Starlite Diner

\$\$
Cheers:
 eXile alert! Starlite at Mayakovskaya has reopened after a minor fire, and is now more Starlite-y than ever before. Was the fire in anyway connected with the newly installed eXile newspaper racks in their bathroom stalls? New Starlite opened up on Prospekt Vernandskovo, just a few minutes from the Universitet metro. New location, but the same great Starlite feel! Check it out. Mayakovskaya location got itself a damn pretty hostess. We just order water and stare. Discovered bagels hidden on the breakfast menu and, even if they're frozen Lenders, we ain't complaining. Get them with bacon for a tasty kosher treat! Re-affirm two howlin' pastel coyotes way up on the Southwest chicken wrap! New eXpand-O breakfast menu has our mouths a-waterin'! Thumbs up on the Florentine Omelet with spinach and feta. Lotsa other items look good too, like the Kamchatka Crab omelet and the pecan pancakes. Best place in town for a late night pre-bedtime burger. Is it just us, or did the omelets get incredibly tasty again over the past month? The best place to watch issues of international significance unfold. Seriously beefed up the ham&cheese! Two important points: Some of Moscow's best burgers and best breakfasts. eXile staffers agree: late night plate of nachos are vastly preferable to clubbing. The chili may not be world famous but it is yumilicious and Moscow's best. Mongolicious omelets that even tames the violent temper of Morris U. Snideman, Esq. Stomach-expanding breakfast burritos a good alternative. Milkshakes huge again, and orgasmic. Try the coffee-chocolate-oreo mix.

Jeers:
 Starlite burger ain't a 100 percent surefire hit. Previous visit revealed an undercooked, soggy patty that had a cooked-in-microwave feel to it. Kid-filled Sundays remind us why we've forced so many girls to have abortions.
M: #1: Mayakovskaya #2: Oktyabrskaya #3: Universitet
Phone: #1: 290-9638; #2: 959-8919; #3: 783-4037
Address: #1: Sadovaya Bolshaya ul. 16; #2: Ul Korovy val. 9; #3: Pr. Vernadskogo 6
Hours: 24 hours

Asian

Aromatnaya Reka

\$
Cheers:
 eXile boku alert! This place serves it up real and tasty every freakin' time. Just tried the fresh spring rolls and they are the best in town. While the pho won't rock your world, it will keep you coming back. Meee sooo huungry! AR's housed in a now-defunct "Americana" gay/transvestite cabaret, but don't be fooled by its new location. The waiters may be effeminate, but the cuisine is straight Viet Cong. Tasty springrolls, good noodles, pho and just about every other Vietnamese dish is as close as you'll get to perfection this side of Laos. Ho Chi Minh would be proud. And the food's so reasonably priced, even the Vietnamese could afford to eat here.

Jeers:
 If we jeered, we'd only be showing that Americans are sore losers. So we'll go ahead and do that by saying: Don't bother ordering the steamed spring rolls or the grilled eel wrapped in spinach.
M: Baumanskaya
Phone: 267-3190
Address: Takmanov per. 11

Spicy

\$\$-S
Cheers:
 Holy shit! A new Chinese/Thai place calling itself Spicy! Could this be the answer to our prayers?
Jeers:
 No! Place should be called ass-y, as the only feeling we were left with was sadness over our utterly bland meal. Not one piece of food had any flavor to it whatsoever, let alone any spice. Couldn't find the Thai portion of the menu and later heard a rumor that it sucked so bad, they dropped it almost immediately. Too bad they didn't

do the same for the Chinese part. There's a good chance their kitchen is infected by the assiness of Pourboire up the street.
M: Belorusskya
Phone: 766-2222
Address: Ul. Krasina 27, str. 1

Maki Kafe

\$
Cheers:
 One of the top spots in central Moscow for surprisingly delicious food at surprisingly not-ridiculously-expensive prices. Good place to take a dyev-date. The Thai coconut soup, milkshakes, salads and even sushi rolls rank high with us or dyevs we've been there with. And oh does Maki have a lotta dyevs to maki upi. Not that we ever would, but if you're one of those peacocking pickup artist douchebags, then you'll find plenty of girls here to laugh at you. High ceilings, spare wood interior make this unlike most pseudo-mod shitholes. All in all, we likes it.

Jeers:
 People tend to think this place is better than it is. Just have reasonable expectations. In life, as well as in Maki visiting.
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 692-9731
Address: Glinshevskii Pereulok 3
Hours: Mon-Thurs 12:00 - 00:00, Fri-Sat 12:00 - 05:00

Vietcafe

\$
Cheers:
 Rockin' Vietnamese food in the very center! Hard to pronounce anything on the menu, but we'd have a hard time complaining about it either. Fo ga (160R) and pho bo (180R) soups were giant-sized and rocked our world. Mains weren't too shabby either. Babe waitresses in elegant Asian gowns gave us chubbies.

Jeers:
 B-lunch is Evro. Why would you want to go to a Vietnamese place and eat evro? We failed to find the promised chicken and pork in our Fo Sao Tkhit, instead finding it stuffed with shrimp (which wasn't so bad). If you really want good Vietnamese, you have to go to a rynek.
M: Okhotny Ryad
Phone: 629-1104, 629-0830
Address: Gazetny Per. 3

Yoko

ssss
Cheers:
 The fish is of high quality, but...
Jeers:
 if Yoko's chefs were true to their craft, they'd give Novikov a karate chop below the belt for breaking with world sushi regulations and miniaturizing Yoko's entire menu selection. Be warned, Yoko's sushi portions are two times smaller than you'd expect.
Address: Soimonovskiy proezd, 5
M: Kropotkinskaya
Hours: From 12:00 till last guest
Telephone: (495)506-00-33, 506-55-33

Balkan

Mehana Bansko

Wi-Fi
\$\$
Cheers:
 Strong buy recommendation for Mehana's business lunch, perhaps the best in town ruble for ruble. Four hearty courses; they don't scrim on the portions. Even non-terrestrial-meat-eaters can find something satisfying. Stuffed eggplant one of the few non-asslike veggie options in Moscow. Killer spicy sausages, and what may be the best okroshka in town. Try the chushka bereg—red pepper stuffed with cheese. Pork marinated in vodka and soy a hit with Russkies.

Jeers:
 Don't touch the Bulgarian pastries, for the love of God! The fact that the veal stuffed with bacon and peppers looks like a dildo doesn't hide the fact that the dish is a bit bland.
M: Smolenskaya
Phone: 244-7387
Address: Smolenskaya 9/1

Yugos

Wi-Fi
\$\$
Cheers:
 With Budva dissolving like Tito's Yugoslavia, we've transferred our loyalties to Yugos, easily the most popular Serbian food for Serbians in town. It's one of those places where you'll be glad they list the weight of the portions... we're talking serious piles of meat here, folks. Whole cow farms get sacrificed here on an aver-

age night. Serbian habit of shouting greetings across the dining room adds to authenticity. The pleskavitsa (R280) and the chevapchichi (R220) lovingly grilled and famously tasty. If you order in advance, they'll prepare a four-person banquet for less than 1000 rubles, and we're betting there's enough food to feed 8. XXXXL-sized chef shows that she's not one the chef, she's also a customer. Best shopsky salad (R99) we've ever had in a place that hasn't been bombed by NATO. Atkins dieters will think they died and went to heaven.

Jeers:
 Kind of a hassle to get to. Gypsy concerts on Fridays might be a little much. War criminals welcomed. Fries tasted like they'd been chewed up and spit out already.
M: Taganskaya
Phone:
Address: Nikoloyamskaya 40/22 str. 4

Cafes

Bookafe

\$
Cheers:
 The best cafe food in Moscow, hands-down. We've liked everything we tried here, and believe you us, we were expecting to sneer. The blinding Juicyfruit colors may be annoying, but they attract plenty of quality dyevs. The spinach and pesto salad is an expensive favorite (450r), the quesadillas (230r) are larger and tastier than you'd think, and even the cheesecake rocks. Dyevs say that the sushi is good, and they offer free wi-fi and plugs o'plenty.

Jeers:
 We'd jeer the pretentious photography and design books, except that they're a good way to keep your date entertained without having to talk to her.
M: Tsvetnoi Bulvar
Phone: 694-0356
Address: Sadovaya Samotechnaya 13
Hours: 11.00 - 02.00

Respublika

\$
Cheers:
 This hip little pink-colored cafe in the second-floor bowels of the Respublika book and music store is easy to miss, or overlook. But the soups, salads, and pasta dishes are surprisingly solid and the milk shakes are delish. The coffee goes especially well with the free wifi. Worth sitting down for a few the next time your picking up a CD. People do still buy CDs, right?

Jeers:
 Only Japanese beer on offer. Sometimes film crews are hanging out to film some precious bit for MTV.
M: Mayakovskaya,
Phone: 251-6527
Address: 1st Tverskaya-Yamskaya 10
Hours: 11:00 - 23:00

Kvartira 44

\$
Cheers:
 The perfect boho alternative to Mayak if you're in the Nikitskaya hood, Kvartira 44 has an appropriately musty feel and second-hand furniture motif to go with its high bearded-intelligentsia-clientele factor. Offerings are cheap and not all that good, but it's a therapeutic way to escape the usual crass 'n flashy Moscow-Boomtown places.

Jeers:
 Like we said, High Bearded Intelligentsia Factor, as well as weary women with shawls around their shoulders. Also too many journalists and yuppies who believe that they're actually complex and artistic. Can be crowded.
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 291-7503
Address: Bolshaya Nikitskaya 22/2
Hours: 12:00 - 02:00

Caucasian

Dioscuria

\$
Cheers:
 Stick with the basics—lobio, eggplant roulette and dolma—and you can't go wrong. Ruble prices unaffected by Moscow boom, making Dioscuria one of the greatest bargains around! Almost as cheap as Guriya, but thrice the quality. One taste of their sturgeon shashlyk or Adzharian khachapuri (with a fried egg in the middle) and you'll be hooked. The delicious lavash bread comes piping hot, perfect for sopping up leftover juices.
Jeers:
 Wild fluctuations in quality remind us of the Nasdaq. Recent lulya kebab served blackened on the outside, raw on the inside and apparently deep fried. Still has deafening live music sung on weekend evenings. Menu

doesn't quite have all the favorites (meaning dolma); sometimes the backroom mafia feel is a bit too realistic.

M: Arbatskaya
Phone: 291-3759
Address: Nikitski Bulvar dom 5, str. 1 (through the post office arch off Novy Arbat)
Hours: 11.00 - 23.00

Genatsvale

\$\$
Cheers:
 eXile alert! Ames recently visited here, comping a free meal from wealthy retired tourists. The Arbat location is pretty gauche, but it's also pretty tasty. Bill came to \$40 a head, but the food was as good as any Georgian fare. Recent visit reaffirms that Genatsvale is good, but the prices have doubled. Delish veal shashlik. Quick service, excellent hachapuri (100R), decent harcho (120R) and mighty succulent chicken shashlick (180R). Excellent prices, a great Val-U. Also serves a massive variety of lamb and pork dishes, including ribs, knuckle, shashliki, and things we've never heard of.

Jeers:
 Prices have shot way up. Hot red lobio tasted like canned Rosarita refritos, only not as good. Lamb chunks in harcho tasted like buffalo chips. Monster PA speakers blast at night; to avoid it, you have to sit at dwarf tables in the back. Expect tables packed with black-clad Georgians giving 10-minute toasts in which all guests have to stand with tired arms holding up shaky glasses of vodka.
M: Kropotkinskaya
Phone: 202-0445
Address: Ostozhenka 12/1
Hours: 11.00 - midnite

Metekhi

\$
Cheers:
 eXile alert! Reaffirm on food here after recent visit. Tasty shashliki, among the best khachapuri, esp the "Metekhi Khachapuri" with 2bl cheese. Still an eXile favorite. Came here with a Georgian born in Metekhi, and it made him homesick. It's THAT good, folks! Red and green lobio that actually contains fresh ingredients. All the taste of the best Georgian places without the slow service and gloomy decor.

Jeers:
 Lamb shashlik a bit too fatty. Not easy to find - it's on a small side street. Cheery decor may make you feel this can't possibly be a Georgian restaurant.
M: Tsvetnoi Bulvar
Phone: 200-0837
Address: 1-i Kolobovskiy Per. 11
Hours: 11:00 - 23:00

Tiflis

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Cheers:
 eXile alert! Recent all-things-Georgian ban means you can't get any Borjomi or Kindzmaurali! Not even if you try turning the wait staff. Recent sending-away party confirmed that Tiflis is probably the best Georgian restaurant in town, especially with the outdoor terrace. Everything is high-quality, especially the various shashliki, satsivi, lobio... The favorite Georgian restaurant for those foreigners who are rich enough to believe that they'll get in on the Gazprom share thing. Serve generous portions of everything; prices higher than Metekhi but worth it.

Jeers:
 Sadly, they the Georgian beverage ban did not extend to chachi. Service can be so incredibly slow you'd think you could fly to Georgia and back and serve yourself more quickly than these turtles. Might make you pre-pay if you're dining late. No little puppet figures of Georgians paying bribes to Moscow cops in the metro. Place often packed. They get mad at you when you try to catch the fish in the fountain in the upstairs dining room.
M: Park Kulury
Phone: 8-499-766-9728
Address: Ostozhenka 32
Hours: 12.00 - 00.00

Eclectic

Casual

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Cheers:
 This restaurant is where elitny Moscow meets Maxwell Smart. You go into the lobby and they size you up as to whether they want you to eat their food or not. If you pass, then you have to enter an elevator which takes you god knows where. Finally you're let out a few floors up, and there, the magic begins. The magic of extremely expensive French-ish food, that is. Only go here on someone's expense account. We sampled the halibut here, and we liked it for its simplicity, though it was a tad oily. And skimpy. Excellent summer terrace, but that's no consolation now.

Jeers:
 If we can afford to eat another meal here, we'll find something serious to jeer.

EATS REVIEW

THAITANIUM TASTE BUDS

By Tofer Lamont



We hate to beat a dead elephant here, but there's nothing more frustrating than taking a provincial Moscow chick for her first non-sushi Asian meal. It doesn't matter whether it's Vietnamese or Indian, Chinese or Thai. Any girl raised to think mayonnaise is one of the four food groups is going to sniff at good Asian food and make a "who farted?" expression before taking a nibble and declaring it too spicy by a factor of 20, even if you can barely taste the spices yourself. Yasha has written in this space about his own favorite case of dyev spice-aphobia, and so has just about every eXile food critic ever (with the exception of Peter Arenseberg, who was either asexual or into young boys, we're still not sure.) Me, I'll never forget the time I took a certain Masha to Tandoor in the Novinsky Passage mall and dropped a week's salary so she could tell me that the samosa burned her tongue, that saag paneer looked like cow cud, and that gulab jamun was way too sweet. This, after I managed to force down some cold-fish-and-shred-dead-beets dish on our first dinner date.

After sushi, Thai seems to have firmly implanted itself as second choice for Asian food in Moscow. How could this be, you ask, with all those red pepper warning symbols that mark Thai menus? I can think of a few possible reasons for the surge in interest and tolerance. The first is the watered down version of Thai that pops up in so many Moscow fusion menus that use accents of the cuisine for color; a sort of massaged stealth insertion of Thai into the Russian palette. The second is the popularity of Thai massage. The third is the fact that so many Russians go there on vacation, where they eat fast food the whole time, then return feeling guilty that they never even tried the street noodles. Whatever the reason, it appears we may be on the cusp of a Thai boom, and the latest entrant is Thai Kitchen on Pokrovka.

A ground-level one-room restaurant just a short walk from the Kitai Gorod restaurant, Thai Kitchen has a dark cozy vibe drenched in red. Tropical underwater scenes unfold on plasma screens against walls that in the fog of memory seem to be made of velvet. The dOcor details are hard to make out in the dark, but it's one of those places that encourages intimate conversations, even if you're sitting across from your plumber. The down-sides are the place can fill up fast, and with a 11 p.m. closing time, it's not much of a late dinner spot.

As for the food, it's not the best Thai in Moscow (that mantle still rests with The Blue Elephant) but the mid-range price is right and it comes close enough to the real deal to earn a return trip, especially if it's in your 'hood. The Thai side of the menu is longer than you'd expect from the size of the place—a full six pages!—and the herbs and the spices seemed remarkably fresh. The only problem with my meal was that Tom Yum Goong (shrimp lemongrass soup) showed up very salty. (Putting the dish to the side, I couldn't help but think of the delicious coconut and shrimp soup at Solyanka, which I wrote about last month.) I didn't check the kitchen, but I find it hard to believe that a Thai chef would put this much salt in the signature Thai dish. Better to overplay the spicy, sour or sweet elements in Thai—never the salty side. But the other basic dishes, like the Pad Thai and Pad kee mao noodles, were prepared exactly right. The rice is good and sticky here and the nam prik sauce packs a punch. Afterward, I promise you the banana in coconut milk will cool you down and bring you to within inches of a deep dark sleep.

All of which adds up to a welcome new mid-range joint at which to get spicy food at a decent price. This Thai won't blow your mind, but it's part of a trend in progress, and we'll take it.

THAI KITCHEN
Pokrovka Ul. 4
11.30 - MIDNIGHT
Metro: Kitai Gorod
Tel: 510-1813

Cheers:

eXile alert! Newbie Zaitchik snubbed his nose at the only elitny restaurant the eXile recognizes by showing up late at the eXile staff party and leaving early. He preferred warm snapper to the dozen cold seafood salads laid out on the table. Can we blame him? Yes. We used to think saying you come here for the food is like telling someone you read Hustler to protect your First Amendment rights... until we ate here. It's really freakin' good, folks. We're not sure if that means that the dames who hang out here hoping to get picked up by mini-garchs are finally starting to develop taste or what, but the food's great. Big ups on the risotto and filet mignon. Prado did its part to minimize electricity use during the cold spell by making even its most elitny clients wait in an unheated cloakroom! Waytago, fellaz! So elitny they don't even have a sign out front. Unless you count all those stretch Mercs and BMWs with smoked windows a kind of sign. Inside, the place is packed full of the beau monde of Moscow. It's so gauche—including huge lamp covers that look like giant bronze sponge contraceptive—that it works. Amazingly enough, the food is excellent and reasonably priced. If they let you in, that is. Delicious raw tuna salad (400r), and surprisingly good Risotto with Asparagus and Shrimps (450r), a dish almost no one gets right in Moscow.

Jeers:

Eight bucks for a beer? Are you fucking kidding?! You won't exactly feel comfortable here. Packed with single aging molls in expensive gear sipping from one pot of tea for four hours just to be in Prado. We also spotted a guy wearing sunglasses, white 70s Bee-Gees clothes, playing backgammon and generally acting cool while ordering almost nothing. Don't these people work?

M: Kitai-Gorod
Phone: 784-6969
Address: Slavvanskaya Ploschad 2

European

Aist

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Cheers:

We were treated to a meal here by an Anal-Lister who shall remain nameless for the next 6 months! The place to go for oligarch sightings (there's a schul next store). We were seated next to Freidman last week. Roof garden done right. Say what you will about Novikov, he finds great chefs. Even the shashlyk's frickin' great. Best mojito ever. The high-priced hos trawling for sugar-daddies even give bums like us the once-over by virtue of the fact that we got a table.

Jeers:

Uppity waiter had to be reminded to refresh our drinks. Folks, this ain't something you wanna be doing for a \$100 biz lunch. The \$50 duck was dry, which just ain't cool. You'll want to get out of your Zhiguli gypsy cab about 20 meters before the entrance or you'll be a laughing stock.

M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 736-91-31/32
Address: M. Bronaya 8/1
Hours: 12:00 - 24:00

Apple Restaurant

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Cheers:

The Apple Bar and Restaurant is open to non-guests at the Golden Apple, "Moscow's only boutique hotel," and it's a good thing, too. This sleek space is perfect for a mellow and delicious dinner. An imaginative and tasty take on the European fusion menu, the Apple is strong on seafood and offers more pumpkin themed dishes than any place in town. Great cocktails, attentive staff, good music. Their Raspberry Lamponi was our favorite cocktail last summer.

Jeers:

You can't afford a room in the hotel but have to eat next to people who can.

M: Teatralnaya
Phone: 928-7602
Address: 8/10 Neglinnaya Ul.

ArteFAQ



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Cheers:

Like Tofer said in last issue's review, this place is "art fag-a-licious"—for art fags that is. For the rest of us, this place is pretty darn good. Started by the people behind FAQ, this place had dependably good food and cheap-o, well-mixed drinks. It's affordable evro-fusion that tries to have some class. Oh yeah, and the plexi-glass floor of the balcony means you can see girly panties just by looking up from your barstool.

Jeers:

The place has a high artsy I-don't-have-a-dimabilan-dimabilan factor. Time Out has called this the new home of the LiveJournal set.
M: Chekovskaya/Pushkinskaya
Phone: 650-3971
Address: Bolshaya Dmitrovka 32
Hours: 12:00 - 24:00
www.artefaq.ru

The Apartment

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Cheers:

Hip wine-bar downstairs, kewl SoHo-style loft upstairs. Menu's not pretentious, but everything's damn good. A welcome break from Novikov copy-cats that are always trying for impossibly complex food to show off that they know ingredients like broccoli di rape. For most of us, their Thanksgiving feast was a first introduction... and most of us agree, it was absolutely d-lightful! In a novel approach in Moscow, Apartment is going for ambience over food. While everything we ate rocks, the menu's supposed to fit the place rather than visa-versa. The chef's a fish specialist trained in France, and you can feel safe eating it here. They've almost made a cult of freshness here. Chill, homey mood, even if this is a favorite among the elite. Great leather chairs and a ghetto for cigar smokers.

Jeers:

We know this is an up-n-comin' hood and all, but it's a

pain in the ass to get to. Welcome to new Moscow, where if you want to eat well, you've got to drop a C-note.

M: Kievskaya
Phone: 518-6060
Address: Savinskaya Nab. 21
Hours: 12:00 - last client

Dantes

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Cheers:

Yasha's totally neg review a few issues ago was way off. Hands down, Dantes is the best new affordable restaurant in Moscow. It has the best fried noodles this side of the Great Wall and at 300 rubles, cheap by Moscow standards, too. The 170 ruble house red isn't that bad. They serve decent evro food and sushi to keep your date happy. Open 24 hours. Has WiFi. Get here before they jack up the prices.

Jeers:

They charge 300 rubles for four pieces of dim sum. The Caesar salad is not recommended. We had the most unsavory pork dish the day after Putin named Medvedev his successor. Also, the little potato spheres served on the side were too dry and the bread stale. Is Dantes losing its touch, or has food stopped tasting so good now that we know the Putin-era is coming to an end?

M: Lubyanka
Phone: 621-4688
Address: Myasnitskaya 13-3
Hours: always

Eat & Talk

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Cheers:

Located in the lobby of a small business center, this place is a good choice for biz lunch or grabbing a night-cap at 5 a.m. It has three big things going for it: location, big buffet, and vibe. Situated next door next to ZhurFak, E&T is constantly filled with cute journalism students. Free wifi, accessible plugs and central location. They just opened a new, nicely designed Irish pub down the hall that is the only place in town to get Guinness Extra Cold.

Jeers:

The seats in the VIP room looked like they were designed for getting some serious work done on your laptop, but turned out to be way too high for comfort.

M: Biblioteka
Phone: 961-3101
Address: Mochovaya 7
Hour: 24/7

El Parador

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Cheers:

When you have a hankering for jamon, the thinly sliced leg meat from the Iberian black pig, this is the place to go. The chef may have a Russian passport, but his heart is Spanish. The jewel of the desert menu is the rich and almondy Tarta de Santiago. Eat it and weep tears of Spanish butter.

Jeers:

Flamenco musicians take to the small stage only after at 8pm, which is good if you're on a date and don't are willing to endure anything but conversation, but annoying if you're just trying to eat.

M: Tverskaya
Phone: 650-1623
Address: Tverskaya ul 12/2 (entrance on Kozitsky)
Hour: Lunch 'til dinner

Guylian Cafe

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Cheers:

eXile alert! Totally not the sucky ass-flavored food you remember! New menu is simply delightful, thanks to director Chantelle and three-star chef Peter Goosens. Will satisfy all your Flemish desires. Waterzoi Soup (375r) quite possibly the best soup in this city. Coquilles St. Jacques scallops dish (650r) simply orgasmic. Large selection of Belgian beers.

Jeers:

Although everything on the menu is good, there's a strong chance you'll end up eyeing your date's dish with envy, wondering if it's somehow better. Furniture lame and reminiscent of 70s Woody Allen movies.

M: Teatralnaya
Phone: 928-7602
Address: 8/10 Neglinnaya Ul.

GQ Bar

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Cheers:

New place to go for those of you sick of Vogue Cafe. Probably the trendiest place in town for those who are willing to throw down loot and not care about it. True gentleman Ames was impressed by the food's quality, and found it fun to eat Evro-food with chopsticks. Three enormous halls should make it E-Z to get a reservation.

Jeers:

Way pricey. eXile editors can't afford to eat here unless someone else foots the bill. For being a bar, there sure aren't many people drinking themselves stupid. Then again, with Grey Goose running 380R a shot, who can afford to? You might run into Russian movie stars and their entourage on your way out of the pisser.

M: Tretyakovskaya
Phone: 956-7775
Address: Balchug Ul. 5
Hours: 24 hours

Los Bandidos

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Cheers:

Excellent hamon (690R+) and more than one great paella (de pollo for 790R, and de cordero for 890R). It's a spinoff of the famous Spanish restaurant of the same name outside of Marbella; the head chef in Moscow is an import from there. Real Andalusian cured hams that hang from hooks from the ceiling, highly professional service without being intrusive. Gazpacho delicioso, but at 12 dolares its loco.

Jeers:

Pulled the old "we're out of all the wines cheaper than 3100R, sir" ruse on our last visit. Who would want to eat Spanish food unless it's a tapas bar in New York or LA? Wildly overpriced but solid quality that makes you feel like you're in a fancy, overpriced West European restaurant rather than one here.

M: Tretyakovskaya
Phone: 953-0466
Address: Bol. Ordynka 7
Hours: 12:00 - the last chiko

Mulat Tomas

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Cheers:

eXile alert! Great place for quiet late-night dining in style. Get started with the free and tasty bread, then move onto the gigantic soups (c200r), which was more than enough to fill some of us up. For those still hungry, the veal mignon (790r) was divine, and the spaghetti with seafood (490r) got high marks. The sexiest new restaurant/cafe/tusovka in Moscow, opened up by the good folks who brought us Ketama, Shyolk, and the late Mesto Vstreichi. Here you enter a den of sin, with plush blue velvet and heavy draw-drapes to close your booth. Delicious, simple menu at reasonable prices. Try the soups, the fresh-baked breads and pirozhki, delicious salads, nice choice of mains. So far no complaints, expect it to be a popular place soon.

Jeers:

Although service was more or less great and unobtrusive, the waiter had the tendency to disappear at the moments you really needed him. Don't go here with your ex-wife. Or your wife, for that matter, unless you're the type who still sleeps with his wife. We prefer the meat mains to the fishy mains.

M: Chekhovskaya
Phone: 694-6252
Address: Bolshaya Dmitrovka d.17
Hours: Always

Ogni

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Cheers:

Ogni comes from the Discreet Charm folks, and it's already drawing a strong crowd of 20-something professionals. Kamchatka Crab salad (300r) was a hit, as was the fact that they serve you .5l mineral waters for 60r.

Jeers:

Otherwise the food is nothing to email home about. Rudnitsky was so incensed by the New Yuppie crowd of once-interesting Russians behaving as dull and bland as Americans that he went out and got married just so he could have a wife to beat.

M: Sukharevskaya
Phone: 207-1222
Address: M. Sukharevskaya pl. 8
Hours: Always

Pilsner Urquell

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Cheers:

eXile alert! Recent thumbs-up for the reliably greasy and good-sized portions at fair prices. Zaitchik praised the Cvickova meat 'n dumplings extravaganza (390r), while we found the smoked chicken a bah-gain at 325 rubles, though we didn't feel too hot afterwards. This chain is expanding quicker than Flounder's waistline! Newish Pokrovka location just like the original: good, cheap beer, and lots of greasy beer food. We really dug the semi-spicy sliced chicken dish (275r). Just about the only place in town where you can say, "Czech, please!" Cheapish new Czech pub at a prominent Mayakovsky location is solidly mediocre... just like you'd expect from the Czechs. Stick to the sausages and beer (0.5l for 75-110R), and you should have a good time of it.

Jeers:

For some reason patrons here seem to be in a frantic race to lower Russia's life expectancy even lower than the current 58 years, as nearly every client smoked not just foul cigarettes, but also cigars and pipes. Pipes! Can't someone just go these idiots who smoke pipes?! What fucking century do these assholes think we're living in? Agh! Coming here frequently will turn make your belly look American. Rude hostess nearly tackled us on our way up the stairs because we neglected to tell her that we had friends waiting for us. Our "medium rare" steak was burnt to a crisp. When was the last time you craved Czech food? Exactly.

M: 1: Mayakovskaya, 2: Kitai Gorod
Phone: 1: 251-2023, 2: 624-7003
Address: 1: 1st Tverskaya Yamskaya 1, 2: Pokrovka 15/16
Hours: noon-midnight

The Real McCoy



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Cheers:

eXile alert! We think we saw the famed baguette de Paris sandwich back on the menu...but we left too drunk to remember. Service has been more-or-less prompt on recent weeknight visits. Always surprises us that the food is so good! And you can easily do dinner for two with booze for under 1,000R! Portion gigantized, filling you up without letting you down. Kickin' business lunch deal. Succulent salmon filet made Schreck feel like he was back living next to the Pacific Ocean. Spaghetti carbonara was good by Italian standards—for 210 rubles, and at 5:30 in the morning! You can also get big slabs o' meat (R400-R700) that actually come rare if you want 'em to. Don't try anything too fancy and you'll walk away completely sated. Did we mention it's the best bar in town?

Jeers:

eXile alert! Former fave 3 Amigos sampler plate now total sucks ass. Chicken wings absolutely inedible—we think they may have spent more time on the grill than on the actual chicken. Service so bad on a recent Saturday afternoon visit, we were forced to call the manager from our cell phone in order to get a waiter to stop watching soccer and take our order. We have the feeling that the high quality of the food probably doesn't hold up at drunken GAM visits. High US embassy spook factor. Sprunky the Mexican food is not. The chick-pea and lamb soup (R180) needs to meet a blender.

M: Kropotkinskaya
Phone: 775-2310
Address: 1st Obydenskii Per. 3

City Grill

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Cheers:

eXile alert! This might be the only place in town you and your Russian dyev can agree on. Thumbs-up for the Caesar Salad (185r). Our Russian date enjoyed the California Rolls (295r). Good option when you're sick of Starlite but don't want something too fancy. Delicious salads and dumplings. Has quietly become one of our favorite places when it comes to finding that point between interesting food, good prices, and cool atmosphere. Try the tuna roll salad, the Thai stirfry, and anything with duck. Cute waitresses, strange chrome bathrooms, and plenty of lookers. Good biz lunch.

Jeers:

They pack you in a bit too close, meaning you can't reveal state secrets without everyone listening in.

Service is still sometimes a bit off. Don't order the milkshakes. They could use a shake up of their crappy Belgian beer list.

M: Mayakovskaya
Phone: 299-5519
Address: Ul. Sadovaya Triumfalnaya d. 2/30 Str. 1 (across from the Am Bar&Grill)
Hours: 11:00 - 02:00

02

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Cheers/Jeers:

See Tofer's high class review on this same page!
M: Okhotny Ryad
Phone: 255-8888
Address: Tverskaya 3, 02 Lounge Rooftop Bar
Hours: The Ritz don't eva close

Prado

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M: Barrikadnaya
Phone: 255-41-44
Address: Kudrinskaya pl. 1 (in the Stalin sky-scraper)
Hours: Always

Tapas de Comida



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Cheers:
 eXile alert! If you're looking for a different summer veranda to dine at, definitely give Tapas a try. Two big thumbs-ups for the Gazpacho (140r) and the Sangria, which rawqs. Pig out on the gigantic Mixed Grill, a steal at 1100 rubles when you see the portions we're talking about. Two of us still had to take a doggie bag. The food here's great, with our favorites including the salmon sevicehe (R190), the beef filet salad (R400), and the rabbit. Great sliced meats and a surprisingly good cheese plate (R 480) well worth it, featuring the not-to-be-missed drunken goat cheese. Downstairs in the tapas room rawks! Totally laid back atmosphere where you can simply point to what you want at the tapas bar. Plenty of Spanish tapas and, for your chauvanistic Russian friends, plenty of Ruscky-style tapas. Best bits include various sliced meats (although chirozo could be spicer...), smoked salmon, fresh-made bread, and a shrimp dish whose name we don't remember. The format seems to be a real hit among eXpats, and we counted three tables of 'em on a recent visit. As always with places run by the folks at McCoy, killer cocktails... but you might actually be able to walk rather than crawl out of this one. Great drinks menu, including smooth cognac like "kheres" for only R120/75g and tasty, funky sangria by the liter.

Jeers:
 Things to avoid: salmon suffle, the chicken liver, and drinking here until 4. Tapas only served on the first floor.
M: Tsvetnoi Bulvar
Phone: 208-2007
Address: Trubnaya ul. 20/2 str. 3
Hours: Always

Uncle Guilly’s

\$\$ to \$\$\$\$
Cheers:
 We admit we've been neglecting Guilly's ever since Goodman opened, but we wuz wrong! Thanksgiving Day meal proved the Guilly crew still can toss together a great American experience, with tasty food and attentive service that can't be beat. Plus, since it wasn't all-you-can-eat, you'll fit through the door on your way out. Guilly's burgers are the best in Moscow fer sure; forget what you heard about Hard Rock and Starlite. Killer steaks are the new favorite of Moe Snideman, Esq., who's on Atkins to slim down before a big case. Some new sandwiches, with the meat-heavy Dagwood winning two thumbs up (only don't forget to hold the fried egg). Tasty black bean soup! On the Ruscky side of the equation, the hearty Solyanka is peerless (and this in a city seemingly awash in solyanka). That "All-American" burger continues to win hearts, minds, and stomachs with its seemingly limitless charms.

Jeers:
 Thanksgiving meal was capped with... fruit cake! We decided to have a shot of absenthe instead. 100 rubles for those little sampler Cokes? This is not a nice uncle! Gave free cherry pie to Americans and U.S. Embassy employees for President's Day.
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 229-2050
Address: Stoleshnikov per. 6, str. 1
Hours: 12.00 - 24.00

Indian

Adzhanta

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Cheers:
 I'm your Russian date, and I simply love this place! Who knew that Indian food tasted so much like Russian food. I mean, we even have the same national dishes. Indians have Biryani, we have Plov. They have Samosas, we have Xachipuri. Next time, I'm gonna come here with my girlfriends.

Jeers:
 Why are all the waiters dark-skinned?

M: Ulitsa 1905
Phone: 609-3925, 609-3701
Address: M. Gruzinskaya 23
Hours: 12.00 - midnight

Darbar

\$\$
Cheers:
 Hands down still far and away the best Indian restaurant in Moscow, despite some new and fainthearted competition. The menu features both southern and northern dishes, and the Keralan owners make sure the Indian chefs get everything right, especially the yummy dosas. Most of Moscow's major embassies gets their Indian catering here (including the Indian embassy), so you can be sure it's good enough for you. And the stunning view from the roof of the Sputnik—their new location—takes a night here to the next level. A rooftop bar/deck is in the works, so stay tuned...

Jeers:
 The music that accompanies the dancers that pop out of the wall every half hour is a little loud. But at least it's over in two minutes.
M: Leninsky Prospekt
Phone: 930-2925, 930-2365
Address: Leninsky Pr. 38 (Top Floor of Hotel Sputnik)
Hours: 12.00 - midnight

Juggernaut



\$
Cheers:
 eXile alert! Now with the self-service section, you can eat plenty of meatless grub, some actually quite good, for very cheap. It's now gone up in our esteem. This

place is great for dinner, but it's the huge and delicious desserts that really bring you back. Unlike a lot of veggie places, Jugg wants you to have a good time. With prices that max out at less than \$6, even our junkie friends can now afford to stay well-fed and fit.

Jeers:
 Many patrons have that kind of depressed, sallow complexion that makes us want to b-line it to Mickey-D's for a Big Tasty. The place has a grim Berkeley vibe until dinnertime, when the staff perks right up and the portions get bigger. Lack of booze takes the whole health-food thing a bit too far. We could really do without the over-weight belly dancers.

M: Kuznetsky Most
Phone: 928-3580
Address: Kuznetsky Most 11
Hours: 10.00 - 23.00

Khajuraho

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Cheers:
 Killer Indian food, with tons of vegetarian options, and lots of copulating statues spread throughout the dining room. What more could you ask for? How's about some of Moscow's best belly dancers? Host to Dr. Dolan's tear-filled going away party, when we tried most of the menu, and loved it all. We especially recommend the palak paneer, tandoor dishes and just about anything with lamb in it.

Jeers:
 Food was rather on the bland side on our last visit. Ear-shattering music accompanies a belly dancer who isn't much of a babe. How is it that Moscow's got so many great Indian options when just about every other ethnic joint in town deserves an ass? We resent having to make choices, and they don't do well for Putin's Russia.
M: Ul. 1905 goda
Phone: 256-8136; 256-7202
Address: Shmitovsky proezd 14
Hours: 12.00 - 'til the last guest

Maharajah

\$\$\$
Cheers:
 eXile alert! Folks, if you're jonesing for takeout and you live in the center, then don't even bother going anywhere else. We picked up in 15 minutes, and our culinary karma was elevated to the highest levels for several mouthwatering hours afterwards. Try the succulent and elegant servings of Chicken Tikka Masala (595r) and the less-spicy but succulent Chicken Tikka (560r). As always, superior service, reaffirming our two turban rating. Hail the reigning Rajnish! New dishes like the Chana Palak, spinach with chick peas, ruled, while old fave Chicken Vindaloo had us working up a massive sweat. Service here is impeccable. An Indian friend tells us these are the best curries in Moscow, and we have to agree. Prices may be a little more than U'd like, but the quality can't be beat. Attention lactose intolerant readers: will make the palak paneer (R360) with potatoes (saag aloo) instead of cheese if you ask nicely. Great butter chicken (R510) and black lentil dal (R250). Samosa (R70 each) might not be Darbar-quality, but it's not on Leninsky, either.

Jeers:
 Told us with scorn that there are cheap items on the menu when we asked if they had a biz lunch. It's in a basement. Naan is not great.
M: Kitai Gorod
Phone: 621-9844; 621-7758
Address: Pokrovka 2/1
Hours: 12.00 - midnight

Tandoor

\$\$-\$\$\$
Cheers:
 Last visit gave us a dinner that is about as transcendental as they come. Packed full of Indians, eXholes, and the occasional Russian. Recent visit confirmed a big turban up on the palak paneer, samosas, and the awesome murg malai chicken tikka. Biz lunch a rockin' good deal for R300, with more savory courses than we can count...and we've never tried the executive version. The prawn masala (600r) is fantastic, succulent, and the Rosh Josh lamb dish (460r) makes us realize tha even if the lion lies down with the lamb, we'll eat that lamb, so long as it's prepared this way. Excellent kebab platter and palak paneer. Serves Kingfisher beer, though it ain't cheap. Lemon rice and stuffed breads earn all four of Vishnu's thumbs up! Madras chicken (420R) spiced to your tastes is so good, we don't know why you'd want to order anything else. Excellent service makes you feel like a Raj overlord.

Jeers:
 Cost of plain, steamed rice is upwards of \$5, which is roughly the same cost of an entire acre of rice fields. Expat presence means you might be forced to listen to two British old maids fight over the bill at the next table. Naan bread with peas a little lame; stick to garlic nan. The toilet in the concert hall area is pretty foul.
M: Mayakovskaya
Phone: 299-8062
Address: Tverskaya ul. 31 (inside the Chaikovsky concert hall, near Dell France)
Hour: 12.00 - 23.00

Vostochnaya Komnata
\$-\$\$
Cheers:
 eXile alert! Better call for reservations first—recent Friday night visit found the place packed to the rim, with lines of people waiting to get inside. As annoying as that was, it's certainly a step up from seeing Sushiflags standing in line for Gyno-taki and Yuckitoria! Our ideal meal starts with some khachapuri, continues with some falafel, and then ends with some curries. Reaffirm two turbans way up on the hummus and the nan-like pita. Murg valai tikka, marinated chicken tandoor, a great bargain at 200r. Easily the cheapest Indian food in the center, and tasty too! Sex Machine gave good marks to the Murg Masala Curry (180R), and the Palak Paneer (180R). Nan bread a mere 30R, and among the best in town. Middle-Eastern menu has nice hummus (100R) and above-average falafel (30R).

Jeers:
 Belly dancer not "all that." Sitting near the bar does not get you quicker drink service. Long Island Ice Tea mysteriously served sans ice. Brought our appetizer out

long after we'd already finished our mains. Tabbouleh was weak. Dishes tend to be spiced for the Russian palate unless you tell them in advance to spice it up.

M: Smolenskaya
Phone: 937-8423
Hours: 12.00 - 24.00
Address: Smolensky Ploschad 3 (Smolensky Passazh, down the pereulok on the right)

Italian

Cantinetta Antinori

ssss
Cheers:
 Currently Moscow's most modny eatery; Novikov called it his first "real" restaurant. We're not quite sure where that leaves Yulki Palki. Just about everything we ordered earned high marks, but ya gotta wonder why the hell it costs so much. Expect to drop a Franklin per person if yer drinking.

Jeers:
 Be prepared to be treated like dirt, no matter how much money you're willing to spend. Even with reservations (on a Tues., no less!), we were stuck outside in a thunder storm... and the hostess showed no sign of remorse. She musta thought we were hardly worthy of getting raised on at this place. Why anyone would risk getting feined at a restaurant is beyond us.

M: Smolenskaya
Phone: 241-3771
Hours: 12.00 - 24.00
Address: Denezhny per. 20

Capriccio’s

\$\$
Cheers:
 This multi-level Italian joint is really two restaurants in one: a lounge pizzeria at street level, and a warm and cozy traditional Italian eatery downstairs. The young Russian chef is serious about his Italiano, and the pasta and Italian desert menus are solid across the board. Lots of Italian wines to choose from, which are better than similarly priced French wines. The seafood dishes are especially out-of-this-world good.

Jeers:
 The pizza is mediocre. Upstaris you may be surrounded by people eating sushi. Our butter was a little hard.

M: Sukharevskaya
Phone: 518-1380
Address: Prospect Mira 5
www: cappricio.ru

Dorian Gray

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Cheers:
 Some people just know Dorian Gray as the Italian place where that guy got shot in the middle of dinner rush back in the late 90s. These days the hearty Italian restaurant with the literary British name is a more subdued place, where the only thing dying a Sicilian death is your hunger. This is the real southern Italian deal, straight through the gloriously sushi-less menu and on into the kitchen, which the knowledgeable Croatian owner keeps stocked with prize Sicilian chefs. Moscow's O.G. Italiano cucine, the food at Dorian Gray is so authentic and so fresh that it has no right to be this affordable. It's not cheap, but it's not expensive, either. Quality Italian for the people—that should be their motto. Situated right across from the Kremlin on the water, Dorian was one of Vladimir Putin's favorite lunch spots before he became a famous pop star. And it's still full of government heavies at midday, including a certain Mr. Medvedev. The one time we saw him eat here, he was enjoying a pasta dish with pesto and (real) Sakhalin crab and some squid capaccio. We ordered the same thing and were glad we did.

Jeers:
 They make the bread every few hours and serve it fresh with a choice of oils and butters, including a tuna butter so good it's hard not to fill up on bread before the main. Putin sometimes still seen eating here poorly disguised in Groucho Marx nose-mustache-and-glasses.
M: Tretyakovskaya
Phone: 238-6401
Address: Kadashevskaya 6/1

‘Gusto

ss
Cheers:
 Claims to offer fine dining in a casual atmosphere, right on Kamergersky! English-language menu a nice touch. Pizzas looked tasty.

Jeers:
 Where to begin...our ravioli reminded us more of pelmeni. Pasta cooked to Russian standards of toughness. Both our tagliatelli in beer sauce (340R) and our date's spaghetti with chicken (330R) were sitting like rocks in our stomach after an h our. Has awful live music cranked to 11. For your money, you're better off heading next door to Pinocchio.
M: Okhotny Ryad
Phone: 209-6922
Address: Kamergersky per. 5

La Grotta

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Cheers:
 We used to like this place for its reasonable prices, its unpretentious atmopshere, and the fact that other Italians liked it too...

Jeers:
 So we went there recently for the first time in years, and found that the times at La Grotta have a-changed indeed. Prices were absurd, the atmosphere depressing, and worst of all, three items we ordered weren't available. So we got up and left. Atsa da matta for you!
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 694-30-57
Address: Bolshaya Bronnaya 27/4

Mario

ssss

Cheers:
 Mama mia, the risotto here is unabelievable-a! And so are a-the prices-a! If money is no object, or you have a friend to whom money is no object but a date who is hard to impress, you can't do much better than this mega-oligarch magnet. Snideman reiterated his legal opinion that Mario's is still the best restaurant in town, citing in his brief the tuna carpaccio and lobster. Still THE place for oligarchs and oligarchabies.

Jeers:
 Recent visit had awful service and just about the cheesiest, shittiest lounge singer we've heard in years. Penne with salmon wasn't all that. Almost got shot by jittery guards after walking too close to a client. Customers fond of bringing in their groomed poodles in designer pakety.
M: Ulitsa 1905 Goda
Phone: 253-6505
Address: Ulitsa Klimashkina 17
Hours: 13.00 - midnight

Mi Piace

sss
Cheers:
 It's clean and they have wi-fi that sometimes works.

Jeers:
 Imagine a third-rate Middle American "Italian" restaurant in some shitty suburb, then triple the prices, half the portions and the quality, and voila! You have Mi Piace. If you are a regular here, then you should be sterilized.
Address: More Mi Piacies in town than tochkas, so we're not going to list them.

Pasta Della Mama



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Cheers:
 eXile alert! 390R biz lunch not only features huge portions, but it just might be the tastiest home-style Italian meal you'll get around these parts. Add to that blazing fast internet, comfy seating and bottomless fresh baked bread with butter and you got yourself a perfect recipe for a biz lunch. This place is from the Goodman's folks is sort of like a mid-sized-town US Italian family restaurant, only at prices closer to Moscow's. Fresh made pastas, daily specials. Good Jerusalem Artichoke Soup, good Spaghetti Bolognese (though a bit sweet), oddly tasty lasagna if you don't mind the noodle-deficiency in the recipe. Good sized portions.

Jeers:
 Didn't bother renovating previous restaurant, Borgo. Overpriced and a bit pretentious for what it is. Service a bit spotty. Crowd tends to the pafos. One foul woman talked loudly in bad English the whole time to her suit-or/boss. Don't bring bread automatically. When we asked for Tabasco sauce, they brought us Tabasco Soy Sauce, noting they don't carry the hot pepper sauce. Soy sauce in an Italian joint???
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 730-5600
Address: Spiridonovsky Per 12/9
Hours: 12.00 - midnight

Pasta Project

\$-\$\$
Cheers:
 Good place to take a date when you want to be cheap but appear to be very "modern" since you order via a computer. Whatever PP's flaws, at least they use fresh ingredients and don't smother anything in mayo. Homemade pasta joint takes the P-Dog one step further and has FULLY automated menus with touch screens and all! Helpful pictures help you decide whether you'll be getting something tasty or something that looks fruity. Salad got OK marks, as did broccoli soup.

Jeers:
 If you hit the "ice" button on the touch screen, you'll get a single cube. They refuse to leave good enough alone, like when they add fried mushrooms to what would otherwise be a perfectly fine mesclin salad. Another example: pesto comes with mozzarella, as if parm ain't pafusny enough. No draft beer. Menu seemed a little short on pastas. Calls itself "territory of healthy food." The only pasta we tried - tagliatelle bolognese - was a little on the bland side.
M: Kitai-Gorod
Phone: 928-6767
Address: Pokrovka 1
Hours: 11:30-23:30

Sesto Sensa

ss
Cheers:
 New Italian joint from the guy who brought U people's favorite Verona. Large portions. Fair prices. Good looking deaf chicks who are "hard of hearing" serve you. The food is neither bad nor great, but it's value-friendly at least.
Jeers:
 But it ain't all that in the flavor department. Verona is still much better. Nice gimmick to have deaf people serve you, but it meant our order got fucked up.
M: Taganskaya
Phone: 911-3653
Address: Novospassky Per. 3, korp. 1, entrance from Ul. Bolshie Kamenshiki
Hours: Noon to midnight

Spago

sss
Cheers:
 It's had its ups and downs, but Spago was recently recommended to us by a genuine I-tie, and he's right. The new chef, who hails from Rome, cooks the most perfect pasta you'll find in Moscow. The best we tried was Spaghetti A.O.R. (350r), with olive oil, garlic and spicy peppers, though almost as good was the Pacchetti in a red sauce with cherry tomatoes, basil, and fresh parmesan shavings (400r). Why can't anyone cook pasta like this, so simple, yet so delicate. The ham appetizer with focaccio (500r) was pleasing, though the minestrone, watery and frozen-vegetable-y, disappointed. Heinekens for 100r.

Jeers:
 Portions very Euro-small. Be careful about taking a date here, she might order from the pricey meat menu, which could give cheap-O expats a minor stroke.

M: Kitai Gorod
Phone: 621-3797
Address: Bolshoiu Zlatoustinskii Per d. 1
Hours: Noon to midnight

Verona

\$\$-\$\$
Cheers:
 Only place in town to find a good cannoli. For Italian standards at impossibly low prices, this place can't be beat. The superb \$3 penne arrabiatta alone is worth the trip across town. Massive prosciutto appetizer (almost) always satisfies. Pizzas also damn good—try the cheese-less Marinara with super-spicy garlic tomato sauce.

Jeers:
 eXile alert! An eXile executive had her handbag stolen from the back of her chair here. Be careful! Can be very crowded, meaning if you even get a seat, you'll be stuck in the smoky, bright front room, rather than the dark, less-miserable dining room. Main dining hall doesn't open until seven on Sundays—they make you wait in the cafe. Limited wine list. Those massive parmesan chunks that come with the prosciutto seem like a big waste to us. Dessert selection extremely unpredictable.
M: Proletarskaya
Phone: 912-0632 / 276-4150
Address: Vorontsovskaya ul. 32/36

Hours: 11.00 - 23.00

Latin

Acapulco

ss
Cheers:
 Thank you Acapulco! There ain't that many places out there that still fit into our image of Russian restaurants: terrible, overpriced sloop that, at its best, reminds you of the concoctions that you'd whip up in 7th grade Home Ec. class. The tacos (R290) come in a star-shaped hard shell reminiscent of Chevy's mini-taco salads! When we asked for a spicey masking agent, they brought us mayo with red pepper mixed in!

Jeers:
 Who needs Jeers with Cheers like these!
M: Park Kultury
Phone: Kultury
Address: Zubovsky bul. 27/5
Hours: 12:00 to 24:00

Hemingway’s



ss
Cheers:
 eXile alert! Half-off burgers on Tuesdays means you can get a helluva meal with beers for under \$20. Considering the depth of the falling \$ these days, that some serious value. A short while back, Hemingway's got itself a new and improved expanded menu. While keeping all the Tex Mex dishes you've come to know and crave, they've expanded their salad offerings and added a whole new steak and fish section. And the number of tasty appetizers, desserts and cocktails has swelled to oceanic proportions. If you're into seafood, then you have try their grilled scallops (340r). The grilled trout (650r) is a bit expensive, but what the hell, you're probably making a butt load of money working some boring consulting job. Wash it all down with Hemingway's patented absinth B52 shooter, the only cocktail we tried that makes absinth slide down your throat like butter.If you're in the mood for some Tex Mex, Hemingway's is still the only bet in town. Brought to you by Chris of the legendary Flegmatic Dog. The deluxe Tex Mex nachos, are piled high with cheese, beans and guac, are heavy enough put down a 300-lb. Mexican wrestler. If you're too much of a pussy to weather the Burrito Taco combo, there's he endangered Chilean Seabass (490r) rocks, and the vegetarian Hemingway wrap. Both lite and good. PThe margaritas (180r) are perfectly mixed for your lady.

Jeers:
 Salsa could still use a bit more umph. Word has it the legendary Chris has parted ways with Hemingway's. O Chirs, fare thee well in thy journey.
M: Park Kultury
Address: Komsomolsky Prospekt 13 (where La Hacienda used to be)

Navarro’s

ss
Cheers:
 eXile alert! We just sampled Navarro's amazing weekend brunch, and folks, you won't find a better place in Moscow. Everything from succulent oysters to fresh tamales, babaganoush to freshly-sized pork shoulder, paella, and a huge dessert spread, all for 1200 rubles. Also if you like spicy Bloody Mary, then definitely try the version at Navarro's, and you'll sweat your hangover away. Yuri Navarro, long an eXile fave, now has his own namesake restaurant not far from Santa Fe, and folks, everything here lives up to the name. Wide-ranging menu offering excellent tapas, ceviche, grilled fish and meats, salads, and even huevos rancheros for breakfast. You should start at the bar and try as many tapas, without even bothering to choose. You might come across the succulent Tiraditas de Salmon, marinated in lime, cilantro, and garlic. Fantastic quality, great desserts, all in all a place to go if you're the gourmand type or just looking to relax.

Jeers:
 So far, no jeers...
M: 1905 Goda
Phone: 259-3791
Address: Shmitovskiy proezd 23, bldg. 4
Hours: 8:30AM to 3AM or until the last guest

Old Havana

ss
Cheers:
 eXile alert! We just found another reason to go here: the kickin' bar. Live Latin music, tons of babes gettin' juicy, and a great place to pick up off-duty Night Flight/Metelitsa whores. Old Havana is new-ing up their menu with some muy delicioso items! Our favorites included the breaded langostinos with a mango sauce,

the massively tasty chicken stuffed with a pistachio filling, scallops, and the yummie duck salad. Now you can eat more upscale Cubano food or the more simply Cubano...and still enjoy the rippin' good cocktails and the wild shows. Good place for large parties. Last visit roundly praised all the dishes, as well as the hand-rolled cigars (1,000-1,500R). Impressive show, full of dark-skinned AfroCuban babes. Bar area packed full of drinkers and dancers, making this a one-stop party joint on weekends. Delicious food at surprisingly cheap prices, enchanting interior, the music and dance show is enthralling (especially on weekends). Two rooms, either the low-key bar area with a live band, or the wild show room, which is good for dates but not for conversation. Avocado Salad (130R), Santiaguera Pork (310R), rice with black beans—all the authentic stuff from real Cuba is there. Already attracting the limber Latino community and Russians who love that whole Latino night thing. Also try the yucca plant and the platinos. Have their own hand-rolled cigars, kick-ass mojitos, the most authentic ones in Moscow! Santeria shows!

Jeers:
Our mains were a bit cold, but the staff was willing to put them in the microwave for us. This isn't a place for quiet conversation. It's more like a people's Cuban restaurant, which is a plus for us, but not for the Salmikovs of this world. We can't really complain about much. Except maybe that the dancers were so caliente that we couldn't look at our dates anymore.
M: Volgogradskaya Prospekt
Phone: 277-0578
Address: Talalikhina Ul. 28
Hours: 24/7/265

Pancho Villa

Wi-Fi
\$\$
Cheers:
eXile alert! Recent late-night visit shows that Starlite is not the only choice in town when you're hungry at 3AM! Massive nacho plate got rave reviews. New Pancho Villa a vast improvement over former digs, with funky layout and much more space. Andreas is back in action, whipping up some of the most authentic Mexican food this side of the Iron Curtain. Who are we kidding though: it's the 2-fer-1 happy hour that goes from midnight til 19:00 that won our loyalty. Best margaritas in town, and sexy Mexican babes to serve them. The chili is Moscow's best, though a bit overpriced at \$12 a bowl. Giant aps plate for R870 with various quesadillas, empanadas, wings and dips a great way to start off, and good for four or more. Great off-the-menu marbled beef that Andreas comped us after last production. Breakfast alternatives have Starlite worried, with a breakfast burrito for just 120R and huevos rancheros for 90R....
Jeers:
No Mexican options on the b-lunch menu. How is that Taco Bell can have a complete \$0.69/79/99 menu, and Pancho's can't even serve a biz lunch with tacos and

refried beans? Last couple meals weren't up to our first. Word out now is that this Pancho isn't quite the Mexican fantasy that its former spot was. Our one breakfast foray didn't wow us. Happy hours only good on weekdays. Tequila pouring babes hard to resist. Endless Desperado loop on TV gets a bit tiring.
M: Oktyabrskaya
Phone: 238-7913
Address: Bolshaya Yakimanka 52

Santa Fe

Wi-Fi
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Cheers:
Recent stabbing murder of Italian businessman outside reminds us of Old Moscow. Full of handsome New Russian types; large bar area serving up wicked drinks. Chef hails from East LA, which should tell you something good. Once you're through here, you can head around the side to Hippopotom, and breathe your salsa breath on someone you love.
Jeers:
Recent stabbing murder of Italian businessman outside reminds us of Old Moscow. Food lacking in substance, though not in pricing.
M: 1905 goda
Phone: 256-2126
Address: Mantulinskaya 5/1, str. 6
Hours: noon - 02.00

Sombrero

Wi-Fi
\$\$
Cheers:
Cozy basement Mexican dive offering all the Mexican favorites. They got tacos, burritos, fajitas and quesadillas all at reasonable prices. Their soups are grande: the cream of corn (190r) or the pozola (240r) are human-gous enough to ruin your appetite. Wines reasonably priced. Quesadillas (290r) quite possibly the largest we've seen in Moscow. Good tortillas with the fajitas (470r). Offers a 20% discount on the menu during the day.
Jeers:
Were out of the only Mexican wine on offer, not that we'd ever be stupid enough to order it. They forgot to spice the dishes. B-lunch composed of typical Evro shite.
M: Novoslobodskaya
Address: Sushevskaya Ul. 21
Phone: 8-499-972-1271
Hours: 12:00-01:00

German

Bavarius

\$\$
Cheers:
The best and most authentic Jerry food and Biergarten in this gottverdammten Town! And probably the best damn biz lunch while we're at it. U could do much wurst than the sausage plates for under 10 bucks. Huge portions, good prices and excellent bread as well. A liter or 4 of Franziskaner Weissbier will erase any worries you might have in this crazy world. For a naughty breakfast option, try the Weisswurst with sweet mustard, a pretzel and a mandatory Weissbier.
Jeers:
Uncomfortable wooden seats. Why the hell can't restaurants just offer comfortable seating?! If you order still water, you'll get a tiny dropper of Evian for 101 rubles. Facklen zie!
M: 1: Mayakovskaya; 2: Frunzenskaya
Phone: 1: 299-4211; 2: 245-23-95
Adr: 1: Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya 2/30 str. 1; 2: Komsomolsky pr. 21/10
Hours: 12.00 - 0.00

Russian

Cafe Pushkin
\$\$\$
Cheers:
THE place to take visiting relatives footing the bill for a taste of passable Roosky food. Schreck described breaded veal as closest thing to Sublime in months. Two babes dining alone at the next table were a close second. If you've got the dough, all-in-all the most impressive "haute rus" cuisine. Black caviar with bliny (\$23) melts in your mouth. Excellent solyanka (\$9), pelmeni, and main courses.
Jeers:
It's so cilivized here you'll get paranoid that Russia has suddenly become like Switzerland. Paying something like sixty bucks for four shots of Russkii Standart really brings out our Jew-quit. Oversized menu makes deciding impossible; overbearing. Grilled lamb (\$17) chewy and not particularly flavorful. Packed full of quasi-cultured Russian bobos and foreigners with over-lydressed dyev-dates. Why pay this much for local food?
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 229-5590
Address: Tverskoi bulvar 26A
Hours: noon - midnight

Shinok

\$\$\$
Cheers:
This is the ultimate S&M Ukrainian dining experience. Seating is arranged around a massive windowed terrarium that houses chickens, roosters, a pony, sometimes a cow, and... you'll never guess... a real live peasant girl! Oh boy, is it sexy, folks. She sits quietly and obediently on a bench beside the pony, plain, pale, meek... While you feast on royal portions of superb golubtsy, borscht, varenniki and fish and meat dishes that range in price from \$15 to \$30.
Jeers:
eXile alert! We were forced to wait over an hour for a table here... on a Tues night! Waiter then proceeded to get our order wrong, spill a \$3 glass of mors on our table, and make us wait another 2 hours to get served. Switched UEs to euros, probably because of Ukraine's European leanings, meaning a bowl of borscht for 13 u.e. is now actually 13 euros. Too expensive for Ukrainian food, especially when you consider it's not much better than Korchma. You might wind up sitting next to a loud, disgusting Texan trying to woo his plain mail-order bride, or a table of cell-phone tagging molls.
M: Ulitsa 1905 Goda
Phone: 255-5963
Address: Ulitsa 1905 Goda (across the street from the Mezhi)
Hours: noon - midnight

Version 1.0

\$\$\$
Cheers:
A stone's throw from Red Square, this place tries harder than just about anyone in town in the decor department. The virtual reality banquet hall is surely the most futuristic dining room in the city. The bar list claims to be the longest in town, and we're inclined to believe it. Excellent mojitos. The food is solid mid-range fare, a Russian-Evropsyky fusion served vertically on fancy plates. Bar goes snap, crackle, pop on weekends and turns into a hotbed of semi-pafusness by drawing a multitude of middle-class student chicks who desperately want to look like they belong on the pages of Glamour magazine. V 1.0's newly expanded dance-floor/DJ area has increased the place's nite life stats to the point that we're considering moving this listing to the clubs section...
Jeers:
After the novelty and the acid wears off, you start to wonder if the virtual reality room isn't a bit retarded and/or creepy.
M: Pl. Revolyustii
Phone: 647-1303
Address: Varvarka 3 (Gostinny Dvor)
Hours: Good ones.

Scandinavian

Night Flight
\$\$-\$\$\$
Cheers:
eXile alert! There's a new chef in Night Flight's kitchen, and that means a new reason to "go there for the food." Which we did. The new menu is both creative and elegant, serving up still some of Moscow's best culinary delights. We started with Kamchatka crab roll pistachio salmon roe (450r for a medium-sized plate), an amazingly rich, delicious concoction for the crab-lover in you. Next we tried the Asparagus creme scallops soup (230r for a taster bowl), made exactly as thick and rich as it should be. The chicken/noodle/veggie wok dish

perfectly captured the oily goodness of properly fried chow mein. Our favorite had to be the main course, a thick juice Reindeer steak cooked rare, served with foi gras potatod dumpling (750r for the "starter" size). While most game is usually, er, gamey, this reindeer meat tasted like it came from Texas, making us wonder how Santa Claus manages to keep himself from cooking Prancer and Vixen after having to look at their tasty loins every Christmas Eve. We finished off with a suprisingly tangy, delicious homemade Cactus Sherbert, which we highly recommend. As always, the wines were expertly chosen, making Night Flight still one of Moscow's very best places for genuine wine lovers. The most surprising wine had to be the Hugel Riesling from Alsace (2900r for a bottle), while the Ironstone Reserve California Zinfandel went perfectly with the bloody reindeer meat. With superior wine selections, as well as expert and discreet service, and views of the hottest babes who seem interested in you, this place still ranks as Moscow's finest dining.

Jeers:
Honestly, there's nothing at all to jeer here.
Entrance fee - 800 rubles
M: Tverskaya
Phone: 229-41-65
Address: ul. Tverskaya 17
Hours: 18.00 - 05.00

Scandinavia

\$\$-\$\$\$\$
Cheers:
eXile alert! Summer patio now open, even though summer temperatures seem like a dream at this point. In any case, this is where you'll find us drowning our hangovers in Bloody Maries and burgers on Sunday afternoons. New chef cooks up serious "gourmet-shit," as Samuel Jackson might say. A Crayfish Bisque (380r) to die for, fantastic duck and succulent Lamb Entrecote, all done simple and to perfection. Killer Scandi-style quesadillas are great for table to share while you're waiting. Big ups to the chicken cesar, too. Our other favorite Swedish restaurant. Re-affirm the buy on the Caesar Salad, our newest fave in Moscow, packed full of Romaine and shrimp. Large fine de claire oysters, flown in fresh thrice weekly, brought the Atlantic sea to our taste buds. As always, cocktails are first rate. One more reason to hit the bar: the famous Summer Cafe Burger is now available year-round in the cocktail lounge! Yippee! Service impeccable a always. Indoors now offers biz lunches from R290! Babe-o-licious waitresses. Bloody Marys so tangy they'll make you wish you had a hangover. Moscow's sleekest urinal.
Jeers:
The man hostess wouldn't seat us in the summer patio eventhough there were half a dozen open table. What did he expect us to grease his palm for a 20 dolla burger? Like we said, not cheap, portions not large, so Old-Europe-phobic Americans might need a little adjustment here. If you thought western I-bankers were a pre-98 phenom, you haven't been to Scandinavia recently. Hummus conspicuously missing from the menu recently, although we've been told it'll be back.
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 937-5630
Address: Palashevsky Mal. per. 7
Hours: 12.00 - 24.00

Steaks
\$\$\$\$
Cheers:
We've been lax on trying this place since we had Doug's, but now that he's gone, we decided to try Argentinean steaks and folks, they wuz good! Forget Goodman's, El Gaucho has the best steaks in town. Sure, they're pricey, but you do get what you pay for. Coal grill they bring out with each steak keeps your meal warm. We've eaten here twice so far, and both times we felt like we would never have to eat again. Mayakovskaya location THE place to take someone you wish to impress.
Jeers:
The Paveletskaya branch isn't all that swanky. Different branches have different menus. We can't afford to eat here more than once a year.
M: #1: Mayakovskaya, #2: Paveletskaya, #3: Krasnie Vorota
Phone: #1: 699-7474, #2: 953-2876, #3: 623-1098
Address: #1: Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya 4, #2: Zatsepsky Val 6, #3: Bolshoi Kozlovsky Per. 3
Hours: 12.00 - 23.00

El Gaucho

Goodman
Wi-Fi
\$\$\$
Cheers:
eXile alert! Last weekend we gave the burgers a try, and all we can say is that Scandinavia has competition. Although Goodman's burgers are pricier at 450r without toppings, they're damn tasty and quality. The chocolate cake (270r) is better than most of our sexual experiences of the last few years. Ribs shockingly good and slide off the bone so easily you can eat 'em with a fork. Plus, they're a relative bargain at \$24. Our favorite steakhouse. They actually cook the meat as you request it, never overdoing it! Tries to be a local version of the Palms, including weary middle-aged waiters and caricatures of local famous people (including a startling likeness of our boy Sam) on the wall. Ribeye (\$34) is huge and hugely satisfying.
Jeers:
We're still waiting for a better-priced version, with better Palms-like service, of this place, but until it comes, we have to give props to Goodman's. Better make reservations on Tverskaya, as biznes is booming. Barrikadnaya branch feels like it's on the third floor of a mall, and it is.
M: a) Pushkinskaya b) Barrikadnaya
Phone: a) 937-5679 b) 981-4941
Address: a) 23 Tverskaya b) 31 Novinsky bul
Hours: 12.00 - 'til the last customer

Steak's

Jeers:
We were playing incredibly loud Russian MTV shite when we visited.
M: Tsvetnoi Bulvar
Address: Ul. Trubnaya 21
Phone: 106-4996

Jeers:
Should be named "Sucks."
M: Taganskaya
Phone: 915-1042
Address: Ul. Verkhnaya Radischevskaya d. 12
Hours: noon-midnight

Torro Grill

Jeers:
It's located in a mall.
M: Universitet
Phone: 775-4503
Address: Prospekt Vernadskogo d. 6 (in the huge new mall), 2nd floor next to the movie theater
Hours: noon-midnight

Tibetan

Tibet Restaurant 
Jeers:
With the legendary Doug Steele now at the helm, Tibet has been reincarnated to higher level of consciousness. The drab 90s decor has been replaced with something more befitting of the Putin era. But the change isn't just skin deep, it's spiritual, too, man. In addition to their kick ass Spicy Chicken Wings (eXile's personal favorite), Tibet now offers a Spicy Fried Potato dish that actually really spicy. The Mustard Sesame Chicken, the Pork With Pepper, Chicken Auido, as well as the Chicken Chili Noodles are some of the "must-try" menu modifications. But what's truly blessed is that we have been assured that Tibet will continue stay within their previously established Val-U range.
Jeers:
That would be like bad karma.
M: Okhotny Ryad
Phone: 692-0267
Address: Kamergersky per. 5/6
Hours: noon - 23.00

Delivery/Sandwich shops

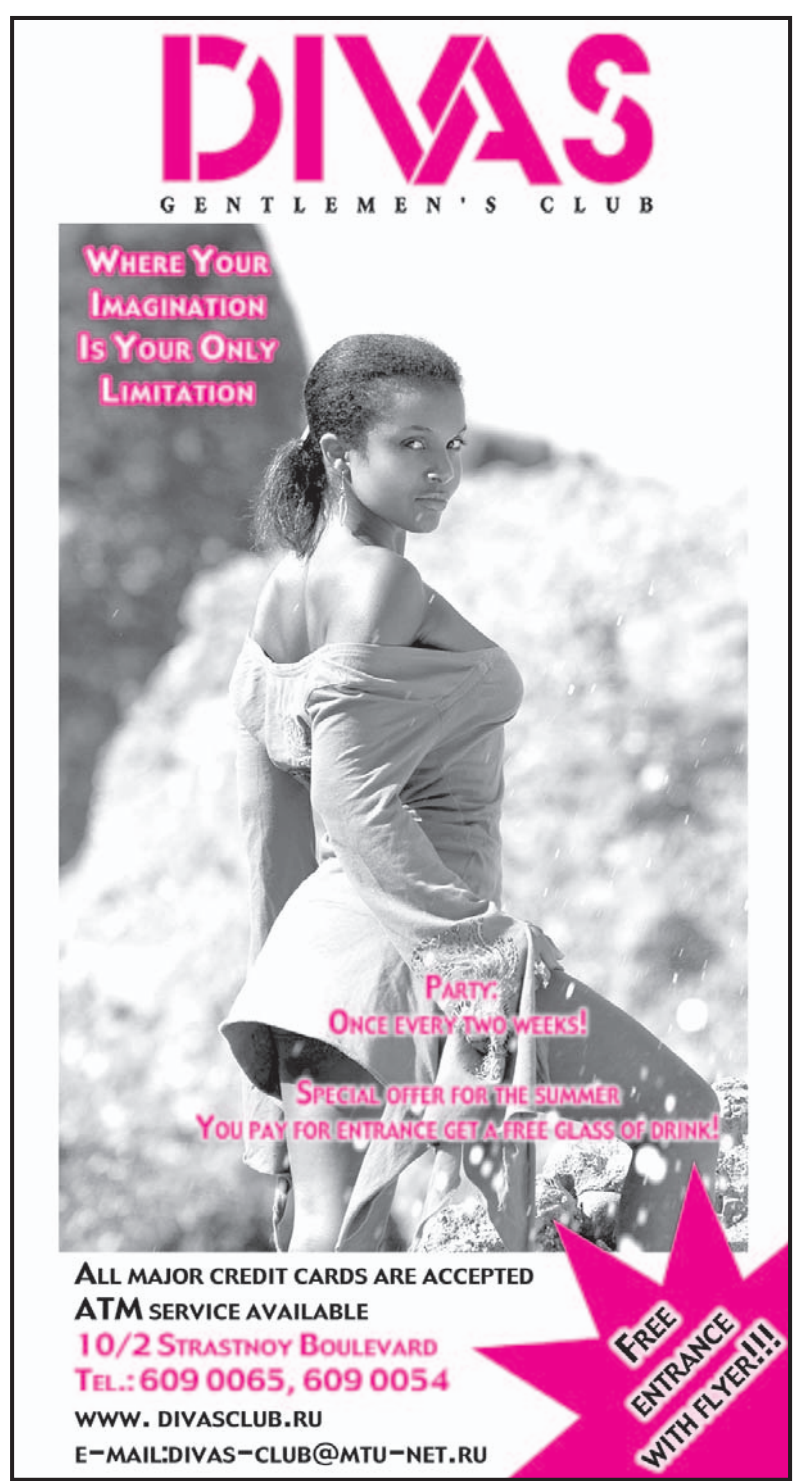
13 Sandwiches

Jeers:
eXile alert! We just ate another massive round of 13 Sandwiches, and the entire eXile staff can never go to shite "sandwich" dives like Pyat Zvezd again. Every sandwich is masterfully thought out, huge, and original, including the roast beef favorite. If you miss genuinely inventive sandwich culture, then pine no more. 13 Sandwiches is the answer to your problems. Seriously. The Prosciutto di parma, sopresata, grilled bell peper, provolone and mayo panini was a big hit with us, unlike any sandwich we've had in the FSU. Popular choices include the Kamchatka crab meat, arugula, sliced avocado sandwich, and the Roast Beef panini. They also offer a range of veggie delights, and now warm meals. Reasonably priced, good portions, quality ingredients, perfect for a business lunch. We're def going back.

Jeers:
They were playing incredibly loud Russian MTV shite when we visited.
M: Tsvetnoi Bulvar
Address: Ul. Trubnaya 21
Phone: 106-4996

Johnny's

Jeers:
The pizzas are, if not the best, then right there at the top. With the people-viewing that goes along with it, this is one of the great after-hour places to stop for a bite. Great gelato with constantly changing flavors! Good place to take your provincial date, who'll think it's "klass" and won't bust your wallet. Afterwards, head downstairs into Moscow's happeningest disco, where you can ditch the provincial date.
Jeers:
Don't get tempted by the cakes/baked goods, or we'll have to say, "we told you so." Sometimes you can smell the sweat wafting up from Papa John's.
M: Turgenevskaya
Phone: 755-9554
Address: 22 Myasnitskaya
Call Lena at 795-3376 fax us at 245-1415 or email us at editor@exile.ru to give or receive some sweet lovin'.



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DRUNKEN MURDERS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

'TIS THE SEASON!



There's nothing like a little holiday cheer to cause a spike in drunken violence across this wonderful land! During the two-week national bender surrounding New Year's, something about the combination of kitchen knives dulled

DEATH PORN

from chopping Olivier ingredients, quality time spent with family, and Estrada concerts dominating the Russian airwaves leads to the most deathpornalicious killings of the year. Even *Moskovsky Komsomolets'* kinder, gentler editorial line can't bring itself to ignore the overwhelming amount of juicy material this holiday season has delivered.

The last few weeks have seen an impressive amount of double murders reported on in MK, like this classic neighbor slaying in the *podmoskovie* town Korolev. This one begins with a couple bottles of rotgut around the kitchen table. A middle-aged husband and wife were entertaining a woman from the same *podyezd* with the best *zakuski* they could offer when something set off an argument. MK unfortunately keeps us in the dark as to the actual issue in dispute, but we're guessing it had something to do with a loan of 500 rubles or accusations of infidelity.

In any event, the fight escalated and the guest took the initiative, cooling things down with the dull, greasy blade they'd been using to carve up the kilbasa. She expertly dispatched husband and wife and left them on the kitchen floor awaiting discovery. In fact, she even made it easy on the militia by leaving the front door wide open. When the bodies were discovered on the very same night, it didn't take the cops long to piece things together. They found the perp in her apartment, still drunk and with several bloody items of clothing. The only thing lacking were bloody footprints leading up to her door.

Another recent double murder went down in the *podmoskovie* village of Zaprudnya, where a pair of ex-cons was found at 8 Karl Marx St. with knife wounds to the neck and abdomen. Neighbors found the bodies after their apartment became uncharacteristically quiet in the middle of the evening.

Later that night, the militia rounded up a Mr. Korzhakov, who locals had seen drinking with the two corpses earlier in the day. When they arrested him, Korzhakov was too drunk to remember the cause of the incident, but MK informs us that an investigation is underway.

BABY BOOM



Of course, not all holiday crimes involve multiple victims. Take the story of Mr. Kotelnikov, who was asked to babysit for his

five-month old grandson while the parents went out to a holiday party. Not wanting to be left out of the fun, Kotelnikov broke into the parents' liquor cabinet at their Yugo-Zapadnaya apartment and got in a festive mood himself.

Unfortunately, little Misha wouldn't let him drink in peace. It didn't help that men of Kotelnikov's generation don't have any experience changing diapers, and even a spoonful of vodka didn't get the shit-covered kid to shut his trap. Ultimately, Kotelnikov hit upon a surefire way of getting Misha to stop crying - he tossed him off the fourth-story apartment's balcony.

A passerby noticed the infant splattered on the sidewalk and called *skoraya*. They established that the baby had injuries consistent with being dropped out a window and investigators quickly narrowed the search down to the apartments directly above the kid's remains. Quick thinking, guys! By the time they pieced the crime together, Kotelnikov realized that throwing Misha off the balcony was a short-term solution and, according to MK, went into hiding. However, he was apparently too drunk to pick a good hiding place, because he was still wasted when the militia picked him up for murdering his grandson.

HUNTING MISHAP



After a long day of hunting in outside of Orenburg, a pair of

hunters returned to a friend's lodge to warm up and enjoy the fruits of their labor. They got a few hundred grams of vodka into their system but, before they could even pluck the feathers off of their catch, they started arguing over who'd bagged more game that day. The argument grew heated and one of the hunters decided to cool things off with a warning shot into the wall. That apparently failed to achieve the desired result, so he then shot his friend in the arm, Dick Cheney-style.

Now, you might think that getting shot in the arm might be just the sort of thing to cool things down a bit. But you'd be wrong. Getting shot only pissed the victim off even more, and he unleashed a string of really nasty insults at his hunting buddy. Well, when the shooter realized that a superficial wound wasn't enough to get his buddy to shut up, he leveled his 12 caliber shotgun at the guy's head and blew him away. While many folks think that's a popgun only good for taking out fowl, it can be quite effective pointblank.

This is where the story takes an unusual turn. According to the classic storyline, the killer would then take out the house's owner to eliminate any witnesses, then roast a duck, doze off while it cooked and die in a raging inferno. But no. Instead, he had a pang of conscience and asked his remaining friend to call the militia and turn him in. Then, as his friend was dialing, he realized what a 10-year sentence in a

	low-yield murder
	neighbors
	podyezd
	really stupid criminal
	control shot
	children
	all in the family
	cries for help ignored
	"investigation continuing"
	carved up like a turkey
	cannibalism
	old people
	murder-suicide
	killing connected with victim's profession

Siberian camp would do to his dental work and turned the gun on himself. While his friend was waiting to get through, the killer went into another room and blew his own brains out, doubling the amount of cleanup his host would have to do. X

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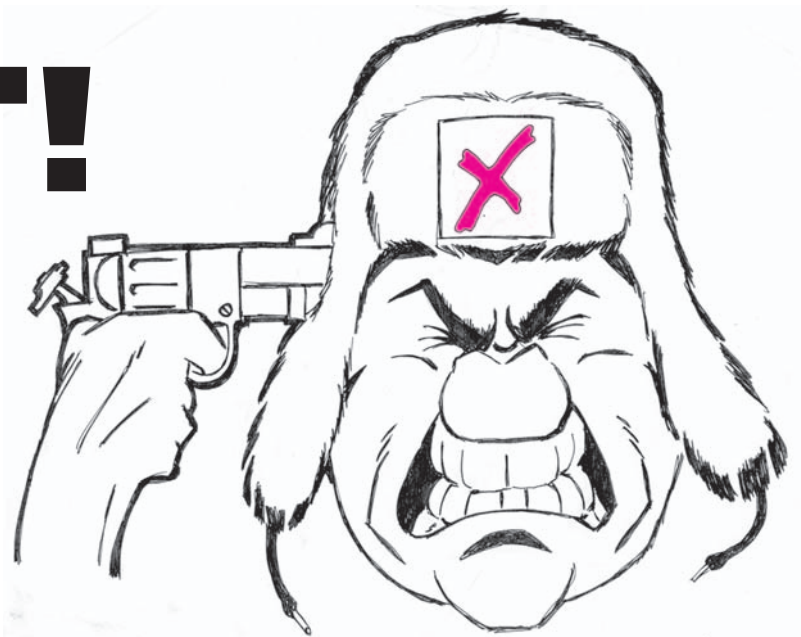
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